THE
Witneſſes
TO
CHRISTIANITY.

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Pref: 03—06—00

THE WITNESSES TO CHRISTIANITY;

OR,

The Certainty of our *FAITH* and *HOPE*:

In a Diſcourſe upon

1 S. JOHN V. 7, 8.

BY

SYMON PATRICK, D.D.

Chaplain in Ordinary to his Majeſty.

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TO

The moſt Reverend Father in God,

GILBERT,

By Divine Providence, Lord Archbiſhop of

CANTERBURY,

Primate of all *England*, and Metropolitan; and one of his Majeſties moſt Honourable Privy Council, &c.

May it pleaſe Your Grace

TO permit theſe Papers to go abroad under your Name, which are writ in defence of that moſt holy Religion, of which your *Grace* is the prime Miniſter in this Kingdom. They contain an explication but of a very few words; yet in them lies the whole Evidence for the Chriſtian Cauſe. I hope I have done ſomething to clear their ſence,

and to illuſtrate divers other paſſages in the holy Books. I have, at leaſt, done my endeavour, and opened the way to the plaineſt and moſt Apoſtolical method of aſſerting the truth of our Religion. They that come after may ſupply the defects, and rectifie the miſtakes, which they find in this account that I have given of the Witneſſes to Chriſtianity. Who ſpeak ſo fully and with ſuch Authority, that it is a matter of juſt wonder there ſhould be any Infidels in Chriſtian Countries.

We can find no other cauſe of it, but that inſtead of conſidering upon what grounds our Faith relies, they ſcornfully preſume that it hath none. If they would but lay aſide their lightneſs, and become ſerious, and if they would be ſo humble as to think it is poſſible they may learn of one of the deſpiſed Miniſters of *Jeſus* Chriſt; I doubt not they would, with a little ſtudy, ſoon ſee him to be ſo great a Lord, that they ought to have a due reſpect to the meaneſt of his Servants,

vants, for his ſake. Nay, they would not envy to them ſuch high Dignities, as your *Grace* worthily holds in the Church of Chriſt. For the Lord himſelf is honoured, in the honour that is done to his Miniſters. And thereby they are made capable to do him ſtill better ſervice; and with the more authority to promote the honour of his Religion.

Of which how much your Grace hath deſerved, by your prudent care and vigilance for its preſervation, and by the countenance and encouragement you give to thoſe that labour in its ſervice; poſterity perhaps may be better judges than this preſent Age. Though that cannot be ſo ungrateful as not to acknowledge your great Munificence and Bounty; of which there are ſuch publick and laſting Monuments, as declare you to be *Primate of all England*, not only in the dignity of your Office, but, which is more, in the generoſity of your Spirit.

Long may our *Soveraign* enjoy such a wise Counsellor, the *Church* such a Prudent Governour, *Learning* such a liberal Patron and Benefactor, and, when through mere Age you must resign and exchange it for a higher and better place, your *See* such a Successor.

As for my self, if your *Grace* will be pleased to pardon this Address, and reckon me in the number of those, that reverence your Vertues as well as your Greatness, I shall not doubt but my Design in this Work will obtain your *Graces* approbation; and that your known Candor will pass a favourable Judgment upon the weak endeavours of

the Churches and Your Graces
affectionate Servant,

SY. PATRICK.

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ERRATA.

PAge 635. line 15. read, *ſignifies that ſort.* p. 636. l. penult. r. *which is a thirſt.* p. 637. l. 18. r. *ſeeks.* p. 641. l. 24. r. *temptations.* p. 642. l. 12. r. *ever:* p. 643. l. 10. for *deſire*, r. *deſie.* p. 645. l. 14. for *yet*, r. *yea.* p. 654. l. 2. for *him*, r. *m.*

1 S. John v. 7, 8.

For there are three that bear witneſs in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt; and theſe three are one:

And there are three that bear witneſs in Earth, the Spirit, and the Water, and the Bloud; and theſe three agree in one.

PART I.

CHAP. I.

An Introduction to the Enſuing Diſcourſe, ſhewing the Scope of it.

IT is not my deſign in this Diſcourſe, to explain and eſtabliſh the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity; which ſeveral great Writers have inferred, with much appearance of reaſon, from the remarkable difference there is between thoſe words whereby S. *John* expreſſes the Unity of the firſt three witneſſes, and thoſe whereby he expreſſes the Unity of the laſt: But to ſettle the Faith and Hope of Chriſtian Souls, in the Lord *Jeſus*; which is the true ſcope of the Apoſtle in this part of his Epiſtle, though in no Treatiſe, that I have met withal, it hath from hence been diſtinctly and fully repreſented.

That this is the drift of the Apoſtles Diſcourſe, and ought to be the intention of mine; will be very apparent, if we go

but back ſo far as the *fourth* Verſe of this Chapter, and from thence take our riſe for that Argument, which I purpoſe to purſue. To know that we are *born of God*, and ſo ſhall be his Heirs, is a thing in which, above all others, we are moſt highly concern'd. That we may have therefore a certain character of one divinely deſcended, S. *John* lays down this General mark of him whereby he may be known, that, *Whatſoever is born of God, overcometh the World.* By this a Chriſtian is to be tried, and hereby he diſcovers himſelf what he is, whether the child of God in name only or in deed and in truth. If when he meets with any thing in this world that would ſeduce or affright him from his duty, he not only defies it and ſets himſelf againſt it, but makes it yield to his reſolution of ſtedfaſt obedience to God's Commandments (which every man, he ſays in the foregoing verſe, that loves God, will certainly keep and not think them *grievous* neither) it is a plain demonſtration that he is dear to God, and hath his very Spirit in him.

Now next to this there is nothing more neceſſary and deſirable to be known, than how we may obtain this great and matchleſs victory over every thing in the world that

that oppoſes our Chriſtian reſolution; and ſo undoubtedly approve our ſelves *heroical perſons*, as they were anciently called, that are born from above. And here alſo the Apoſtle lends us his aſſiſtance; telling us in the latter end of that *fourth* Verſe, that we muſt atchieve it by Faith. *And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our Faith.* So couragious, ſo powerful, ſo ſucceſsful is an hearty lively Faith, that you ſee he calls it by the name of *victory* it ſelf. If we believe ſtedfaſtly, we ſhall tread the world under our feet, and eaſily deſpiſe all its temptations; as thoſe valiant Worthies did, whoſe example another Apoſtle ſets before us, in the Eleventh Chapter to the *Hebrews*: A portion of Scripture which he that means to be a conqueror, ſhould think he can never read too oft.

But there is a farther enquiry remaining, which every body will be apt to make; and that is, what this *Faith* may be, which is ſo victorious and triumphant. And therefore the Apoſtle takes care to ſatisfie us in this matter alſo; when he tells us, Verſe 5. it is nothing elſe but *to believe that Jeſus is the Son of God.* To be heartily perſwaded, he means, that that great

perſon, who was born of the *Virgin Mary*, and was known by the name of *Jeſus*, and overcame the world ſo glorioufly, was indeed ſent from God unto us, and owned by him as *the expreſs image of his perſon*; ſo that we may as infallibly depend upon the truth of what he hath ſaid, either of himſelf, or concerning us, as we can upon any thing of Senſe or Reaſon; by which we think our ſelves bound to guide and determine our reſolutions and actions in this life.

But ſtill after all this, there is one thing more that we cannot but deſire to be very ſure of; without which all the reſt will ſtand us in no ſtead, but we ſhall flag and deſpair of ſucceſs, *viz. That Jeſus is indeed the Son of God.* This if it be not well proved by ſubſtantial arguments, we can have no ſolid faith, and ſo no victory; and ſo no ſon-ſhip, no hope in another world. The Apoſtle therefore, that he may ſerve us in bringing ſome evident demonſtration of this ſo important a truth, tells us in the next words (Verſe 6.) that *Jeſus* did not only ſay he was God's Son, and confidently affirm himſelf to be the Divine perſon ſo long look'd for, to come into the world; but that he came with

very

very ſufficient and unreproveable witneſſes of it, *viz.* the *WATER*, the *BLOUD*, and the *SPIRIT*: which made this truth good to all thoſe, who conſidered their teſtimony. If the firſt of theſe [*WATER*] ſhould not be thought great enough to merit belief; yet the [*BLOUD*] joyned with it adds great force to its perſwaſion. Or if both theſe ſeem too weak, yet this laſt, the *SPIRIT*, the Apoſtle doubts not is ſo ſtrong to conquer mens minds, and make them believe in *Jeſus*, that he ſays, *The Spirit is truth.* That is, ſuch an undoubted proof that *Jeſus* was what he pretended to be, *the Son of God*; that no man can be deceived who relies upon it, and no man can refuſe, if he give heed to it, to rely and depend upon ſuch a witneſs.

Now this was a thing notorious in thoſe days, and needed no proof at all, the whole Country of *Judæa* could witneſs it, that *he came by* (or rather *with*) *Water, Bloud and the Spirit.* And therefore the Apoſtle doth not go about to make this good, that there were ſuch *Witneſſes* (it being a matter confeſſed) but rather repeats it over again, as the ſtrongeſt proof of his Divine Authority: adding more-

over there-withal, that there were three other Witneſſes, who by their concurrent teſtimony would unanimouſly juſtifie this Truth. *For*, ſaith he, in the words I have choſen to explain, *There are three that bear record (or witneſs) in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt: and theſe three are one. And there are three that bear witneſs in Earth, the Spirit, and the Water, and the Bloud: and theſe three agree in one.* As if he had ſaid, You cannot reaſonably doubt of that which we preach concerning *Jeſus*, if you go but to thoſe three witneſſes, to which I have ſent you, the *Water*, the *Bloud* and the *Spirit*; for they all affirm with one mouth, that he was the *Son of God*. And as they teſtifie this to you upon the Earth; ſo there are three other Witneſſes alſo who declare it to you from Heaven: to whom I firſt direct you; and then to thoſe three that here on Earth, as I have told you, bear their record to him.

There are not a few Copies of the New Teſtament, it muſt be confeſſed, which leave out the Teſtimony of theſe three Witneſſes that ſpeak from Heaven, not reading the *ſeventh* Verſe; as is noted not only by *Socinus* and his followers, but by *Eraſmus*,

Eraſmus, *Grotius*, *Curcellæus*, and our Learned *Selden*, whoſe collections to this purpoſe far exceed all former obſervations. But yet this laſt named Great Author, hath ſaid ſo much * to juſtifie the Antiquity of our preſent Reading, and to keep the ſeventh Verſe in the place wherein it now ſtands, that I make no queſtion theſe are the words of S. *John*, concerning the three Heavenly Witneſſes, the *Father*, the *Word*, and the *Holy Ghoſt*; and accordingly I ſhall in the firſt place appeal to their teſtimony for the confirming of this Truth, and for the ſupporting thereby of our Faith, that *Jeſus is the Son of God.*

* *L. 2. de Syned. cap. 4. num. 4.*

And if any body ſhall ſay, What need is there of this in a Chriſtian Country? There are no Infidels ſure among us; nor are we in danger to turn *Pagans*, *Turks* or *Jews*, who blaſpheme the Lord *Jeſus?* I ſhall not labour to ſtop *their mouths*, by caſting reproaches on *others*; nor complain of the apoſtaſie which ſome think they have reaſon to lay to the charge of too many in this preſent untoward generation: But deſire them to take their Anſwer from S. *John* himſelf, in the *thirteenth* Verſe of this very Chapter: Where they will find that he thought it not unneceſſary *to write*

theſe

theſe things to them that believe on the name of the Son of God; that they might know how happy a thing it was to be a Chriſtian, and that they might believe (i. e. continue to believe) *on the name of the Son of God.* And I may modeſtly ſuppoſe, that what he thought good to aſſert here with ſo much care and exactneſs, it will not be thought an unprofitable diligence if I ſtudy to expound and enlarge, for the benefit of believers. It will be ſome ſatisfaction to me however, to have had it in my heart to do ſome honour to my Saviour, and to have endeavoured to make any part of his holy Book more clearly underſtood; eſpecially if what I write ſhall encreaſe the Faith of any Chriſtian Soul, and fill it with an aſſured hope in *Jeſus*, by abiding conſtant in this belief, that *he is the Son of God.*

That being the thing which is to be proved by theſe witneſſes, it will be neceſſary to ſearch a little into the meaning of the Phraſe, before we take their examination about it. And it muſt be confeſſed, that though *Jeſus* be the *Eternal Son of the Father, God of God, begotten of him before all Worlds*; yet this is not always meant when he is called *his Son*: which is a name in the holy ſtile, not ſo much expreſſing

ſing his Nature as his high Authority and Sovereign power, which he hath received, as the Mediator between him and us, from God the Father Almighty. So I think we are here to underſtand the Apoſtle, who under the Name *Jeſus* comprehends all that belongs to his perſon, both his Divine and Humane nature; and affirms that this perſon hath Sovereign Authority committed to him by God the Father of all: who hath given him Commiſſion, and deputed him in his ſtead to declare his mind, and acquaint us with his will; and, having by himſelf purged our ſins, promoted him to ſit down on the right hand of the Majeſty on high, as that great King and Lord of all, by whom we are to be governed now, and to be judged at the laſt day. Sure I am, in many places of the holy Scripture which ſay, *he is the Son of God*, the meaning is expounded in other places to be this; that *he is the Chriſt*, or the anointed of God. That is, *Jeſus*, who was conceived by the Holy Ghoſt, born of the Virgin *Mary*, crucified under *Pontius Pilate*, roſe again from the dead, and afterward appointed S. *John* and the reſt of the Apoſtles, to preach thoſe things to all Nations which we read in the holy Goſpel; was indeed ſent of God

(accord-

(according to the ancient Prophecies) with his own power and authority, and is now, by the ſuffering of death, crowned with glory and honour, to be our King and Sovereign Lord, whom we are all to obey, and from whom alone we are to expect all our rewards.

And there is great reaſon to think that theſe are phraſes of the very ſame import, here in S. *John*, if we compare but the *firſt* Verſe of this Chapter with the *fifth*. In the former we read, that *whoſoever believeth that Jeſus is the Chriſt, is born of God*: In the latter he tells us, that *he who overcometh the world, believeth that Jeſus is the Son of God*. It is the very ſame Faith no doubt whereby we are *born of God*, and whereby we *overcome the world*; and therefore it is the very ſame thing to believe that *Jeſus is the Chriſt*, and to believe that *Jeſus is the Son of God*. Expreſs it how you pleaſe, either of theſe ways, this alone is the Faith which can regenerate a man and put a Divine Spirit into him; that is, make him a conqueror over the world as *Jeſus* was. Let the *ſecond* Chapter of this Epiſtle, *ver.* 22. be conſulted alſo, and there you will find, that *Chriſt* and the *Son* are terms equivalent,

and

and have the ſame ſignification. To which if you add ſome places in the Evangeliſts, they will make you ſee this more evidently. When S. *Peter* made this confeſſion, xvi. *Matth.* 16. that *Jeſus* was *Chriſt the Son of the living God*, there is no more meant, one would think, by thoſe words, *the Son of God*, than what the other word, *Chriſt*, includes: becauſe when our Saviour would have them know that it was not fit for them, as yet, to divulge this truth which S. *Peter* confeſſed, he only charges his Diſciples (*ver.* 20.) that they ſhould tell no man that he was *Jeſus the Chriſt*. And if this be not ground enough to conclude the identity (as we ſpeak) of theſe words, the other Evangeliſts will put it out of doubt. For S. *Mark* makes the confeſſion of S. *Peter* to have been no more than this, *Thou art the Chriſt*, viii. 29. And S. *Luke* relates it not much otherwiſe, when he ſays that he acknowledged our Saviour to be *the Chriſt of God*, ix. 20. To be the *Chriſt*, or to be the *Son*, the *Chriſt of God*, or the *Son of God*, according to the underſtanding of theſe Divine writers, is the very ſame; and in theſe places nothing different. And indeed, it is very probable that S. *Hieroms* opinion is true, who believed

that

that the Apoſtles were not yet ſuch proficients as to underſtand the eternal generation of our Lord *Jeſus* from the eſſence of the Father. For we find them very ignorant of divers things that were eaſier to be learnt than this, which if they had known, they would not have expected to ſee him ſettle his Throne upon Earth, nor doubted of his Reſurrection from the dead, and many other things, as they did.

But the comparing of two other places will make this ſtill more manifeſt. In the xxvi. *Matth.* 63. we read that the High Prieſt adjured our Saviour to tell him, if he were *the Chriſt, the Son of God.* They all expected one to appear under this character; This was the common title of that great perſon, who they believed would ſhortly come: But they meant no more by it, than one appointed by God to be their King, as is apparent from S. *Luke*, who relates that queſtion barely thus; xxii. 67. *Art thou the Chriſt? tell us.* And after our Saviour had made that anſwer which we read both in him and S. *Matthew*; he tells us (*ver.* 70.) they all replied again, *Art thou then the Son of God?* which was no more than to ſay, muſt we take this for confeſſed then, that thou affirmeſt

firmeſt thy ſelf to be ſent, anointed, and ſet over us by God? Wilt thou ſtand to that which thou juſt now ownedſt, when we asked thee that queſtion? For without all doubt the Chief Prieſts and the Scribes intended nothing by that phraſe, *the Son of God*, but what was comprehended in the other, *the Chriſt*. And therefore when *Pilate*, upon their accuſation, examined him upon the ſame matter, he asks nothing elſe but this (as this Apoſtle S. *John* relates, xviii. 33.) *Art thou the King of the Jews?* which is the plain interpretation of the word, *Chriſt*. For that is not the proper name of any perſon, as *Lactantius* * rightly obſerves, but a *name of power and dominion*, ſignifying him to be their Sovereign: For in this ſtile, ſays he, the *Jews* were wont to ſpeak of their Kings, whom they called *Chriſts*, or Gods anointed.

* *Nuncupatio poteſtatis & regni. Sic enim Judæi Reges ſuos appellabant. L. 4. Cap. 7.*

Once more, when they were enraged at our Saviour for calling himſelf the *Son of God* (as S. *John* tells us, Chap. x.) He juſtifies himſelf by a reaſon which ſignifies no more, but that he called himſelf, *the Chriſt*, the anointed of God, as you may read, *ver.* 34, 35, 36. If they were called *Gods* in old time, *to whom the Word of God*

God came (*i. e.* who received commiſſion and authority from God to be the Judges and Rulers of his people) then it could be no offence, much leſs a *blaſphemy*, for him whom God had *ſanctified* (*i. e.* ſet apart and anointed to this office of being their Lord and King) to call himſelf the *Son of God*. For ſo he was by his place; and there was no need he ſhould ſay any thing of the Divine nature that was in him. Well then, to be the *Son of God* and to be *the Chriſt*, being but different expreſſions of the ſame thing; and the word *Chriſt* ſignifying *anointed*, one ſet apart to an high office, and (in its eminent ſence) that perſon who was to ſuſtain the place of God in this world, to be the King of *Iſrael*, yea the Governour and Ruler of all mankind; we muſt conclude that when the Apoſtle ſays here, *Jeſus is the Son of God*, his meaning is, that He is the Holy one of God, the perſon whom he ſanctified by the unction of the Holy Ghoſt, and ſent into the World; to whom he hath now given all power in Heaven and in Earth, that every knee ſhould bow to him as the Sovereign Lord of the World; whom we are to hear and obey and depend upon in all things.

For this is the ſtile you may obſerve o
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the Old Teſtament (from whence you may learn the riſe and original of this manner of ſpeech) which calls thoſe Kings, who derived their authority immediately from God, by the name of *his Sons*. Becauſe when they were anointed by his order, they were made what they were not before, and begotten (as they ſpoke) again: And being created by God to their new dignity, they are therefore called his Sons. The firſt time we meet with the phraſe, is in the ſtory of the firſt King of *Iſrael*, 1 *Sam.* xiii. 1. where *Saul* is called, as the words are in the *Hebrew*, *the Son of one year in his Kingdom*. Becauſe there was but a year paſſed ſince the time of his unction; by which he was born Gods Vicegerent, and (as you read x. *6.*) *turned into another man*. And indeed we find this imitated in Ethnick writers, who call the day their Emperors entred upon their Reign, their *Birth-day*. So we read in *Spartianus* that *Adrian* being informed by Letters that *Trajan* had named him for his Succeſſor, cauſed the *birth-day of his adoption* to be celebrated. And two days after, hearing of his death, he ordered they ſhould keep *the birth-day of his Empire* *. But I do not intend to launch out of the holy ſtory, where we find this more plainly

* *Natalem imperii inſtituit celebrandum.*

delivered in the Hiſtory of the ſucceeding Kings of *Iſrael*. For when the *Philiſtins*, the *Moabites*, the *Syrians*, the *Ammonites* and other neighbouring People with their Princes, conſpired (after they had been conquered by *David*) againſt the *Lord* and againſt his *anointed*; reſolving to caſt off their yoke; the *Pſalmiſt* ſhews (*Pſal.* 2.) how vain and idle their attempt would prove, becauſe God had appointed him, whom he ſent a Prophet to anoint, to be his King. This decree of God he averrs, and openly declares (*ver.* 6, 7.) that the Lord ſaid unto him, *Thou art my Son, this day* (*i. e.* when he anointed him) *I have begotten thee.* So that to riſe againſt him, was to war with God Almighty, whoſe *Son*, that is, Vicegerent he was in thoſe Countries. And therefore if they were well adviſed he exhorts them all to go and *kiſs the Son*, *ver.* 12. *i. e.* ſubmit themſelves, by that token of humble ſubjection, to him who had his Authority immediately from God: Nay, was *his firſt-born*, the moſt eminent Prince, that is, that ever he made, lxxxix. *Pſal.* 27. And therefore he was the prime type of our Lord Chriſt, to whom theſe words are applied, becauſe he was the *Son of David*, that great King, who was to *reign over them for ever*, as the

Angel

Angel ſaid, i. *Luke* 33. And if you paſs from hence to the next King, *Solomon*, (who had a particular unction alſo, and in whoſe reign was prefigured the glorious Kingdom of our Saviour) you will find that God ſays by a Prophet concerning him, *I will be his Father, and he ſhall be my Son*, 2 *Sam.* vii. 14. Which words are a promiſe to make *Solomon* King, and ſettle him on the Throne of his Father *David*. So He underſtood it, as appears by the ſpeech which *David* made, not long before his death, to all the great men of his Kingdom, 1 *Chron.* xxviii. where he tells them (*ver.* 4.) that as *Jeſſe* had many Sons, *Yet God liked him only to make him King over all Iſrael*: So of the many Sons which the Lord had given him (*ver.* 5.) *He had choſen Solomon to ſit upon the Throne of the Kingdom of the Lord*. As is evident, ſaith he, from thoſe words of God ſpoken by *Nathan* (*ver.* 6.) *I have choſen him to be my* SON, *and I will be his* FATHER, *i. e.* made choice of him to be King of *Iſrael* in thy room, and as I have been to thee, ſo I will be to him. Thus *Solomon*, one would think, interpreted theſe words, when he prays God, who had made good one part of his promiſe, to perform the other alſo, 2 *Chron.* i. 8, 9. *Thou haſt ſhewed*

great mercy unto David my Father, and hast made me reign in his stead (as much as to say, *made me thy Son*) *now, O Lord God, let thy promise unto my Father be established*; that is, of being *a Father to me*, now that I am become thy son, and set by thee over a people, *like the dust of the Earth in multitude.*

By this time I suppose it will be no wonder to any intelligent person, that these Kings are called the *Sons of God*; who did not only govern in that Country, which was called, it is well known, *God's land*, and the inhabitants whereof were his *peculiar people*: but were appointed by his special direction, and *anointed with his holy oil* (lxxxix. *Psal.* 20.) and had, as it were, their being and birth from God, who promoted them to *sit upon his Throne*, and to be *Kings for the Lord God*, as you read 2 *Chron.* ix. 8. so that the Kingdom it self is called in that Book *the Kingdom of the Lord*, xiii. 8. And the Judges also in the Courts of that Kingdom are said to exercise the *Judgment of the Lord* and not of man (xix. 6.) that is, to sit there in God's stead, to do men justice: And because of this great power and trust committed to them by him, are called, as you heard,

lxxxii. *Pſal.* 1, 6. *Gods, and the children of the moſt High*; whoſe deputies they were, and for whom they judged. And therefore it is the leſs wonder, that when this Great Prince came among them, to whom *all judgment is committed*, and who hath *all power in Heaven and in Earth*, and is *Lord of all*, and *appointed by God the heir of all things*, He is called by the ſame name that they were. If there were no other reaſon for it, his office would give him a title to it: becauſe he is the *Lords Chriſt*, anointed by God to the higheſt dignity and government under him, not only over that Country, but over all Nations on the Earth; who, by believing on him, were all to be made a *choſen generation, a royal Prieſthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar people*, 1 *Pet.* ii. 9. But to ſhow his moſt excellent greatneſs he is called the *Son of God*, with two marks of his preeminence above all other who have had that name: Firſt, he is called, ὁ υἱὸς, *that Son*, that eminent King, the King of Kings; like to whom none ever was. For, ſecondly, whereas thoſe *ſons of the higheſt* ſpoken of before, were to *die like* other *men, and to fall like one of the Princes*, in other Countries, He is called the Son, τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος, *of that God who liveth*, xvi. *Matth.* 16. that is, *Pſal.* 82. 7.

of the immortal eternal God: And by conſequence is like his Father, an everlaſting King, *of whoſe Kingdom*, as the Angel told his Mother, i. *Luke* 33. *there ſhall be no end.*

Thus the Author of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, who underſtood this language well enough, hath diſcourſed in the *Firſt* Chapter. Where he proves that *Jeſus* is the *Son of God* in a more eminent ſence than any Angel in Heaven, according to thoſe ancient prophecies before named, concerning *David* and *Solomon*, as you read *ver.* 4, 5. From whence the *Jews* learnt to call the Meſſiah, who they confeſs is in thoſe places myſtically ſpoken of, by that name of the *Son of God.* Which the Apoſtle there ſhows is the greateſt name of excellence, and ſignifies the higheſt honour and dignity; ſuch as God hath conferred upon no other. And then he proceeds to ſhow, that according to other prophecies which ſpeak of his ſupereminence, *his Throne is for ever and ever*: (*ver.* 8.) For *God*, who is *his God* (in a peculiar manner loving and rewarding him) *hath anointed him with the oil of gladneſs* (preferred him, that is) *above all that partake of Kingly dignity*, *ver.* 9. He hath made him indeed

indeed his *firſt-born, the Prince of all the Kings of the Earth* (as S. *John* ſpeaks, i. *Revel.* 5.) to whom we are to ſubmit our ſelves with the greateſt devotion of ſpirit, and from whom we may then expect Protection, Bleſſing, and the nobleſt Rewards. For he is the long expected *Son of God*, who excells all other that were ever called by that name; the *King* of inconceivable Majeſty, whoſe ſplendor could not ſo much as be fore-ſhadowed by *Solomon* in all his glory. Thus *Nathanael* I obſerve puts theſe two expreſſions together, in his confeſſion of our Saviour, out of a vehement affection redoubling his words, *Thou art that Son of God, thou art that King of Iſrael*, i. John 49.

This is the buſineſs upon which we are to examine theſe *Witneſſes*; we are to conſider what they ſay to this point, that the Lord *Jeſus* was ſent from God as *Moſes* had formerly been: only *Moſes* as a *Servant*, but he as a *Son* (according to what you read, iii. *Heb.* 5, 6.) with a fulneſs of authority, with all the power of God; ſo that we may confidently rely on every thing that he hath ſaid, as the very mind and ſence of God. This if we can hear them ſpeak, they are witneſſes ſo beyond

all exception, that we cannot chuſe but reverence him, and receive him, and obey him, and put our truſt in him, and rejoyce in his royal favour and love evermore. For the firſt three are no leſs perſons than the *Father*, the *Word*, and the *Holy Ghoſt*. Whoſe gracious aſſiſtance let us humbly implore, that this and all other our works may be begun, continued and ended, to the glorifying of his holy Name.

A Prayer.

O Father of lights, from whom cometh every good, and every perfect gift, illuminate my mind in theſe Meditations, that I may be able to enlighten others, and lead them into a good underſtanding in all things. Guide and direct my thoughts, that I may reaſon and diſcourſe aright. Shine into all our Souls by the light of the glorious Goſpel
John.6.40 *of Chriſt, that we* ſeeing the Son, may believe on him: *and being made thy children by adoption and grace, may be daily more and more renewed by thy holy Spirit. Settle in our Souls that mighty faith, whereby we may have*

have power and ſtrength to have victory, and to triumph over the Devil, the World, and the Fleſh. Strengthen it every day by conſtant Meditation on thoſe things, which thou, O Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt, haſt ſo many ways declared to us: that it may grow ſtill more victorious, and we may feel the happy fruit of it in greater joy and triumph of ſpirit, in aſſured expectation of the Crown of righteouſneſs, which thou haſt promiſed to all faithful Souls.

O that none of the inticing allurements of this world may ever more deceive us, and ſteal away our hearts from our true happineſs: nor any of the troubleſome paſſages of this life ever hereafter diſhearten us, and divert us from the purſuit of it: But the Faith of Chriſt may ſo intirely poſſeſs our hearts, as to keep us ſtedfaſt and upright, in the midſt of all the temptations, of what kind ſoever they be, that aſſault us. And looking up unto Jeſus *the author and finiſher of our Faith, we may ſtill ſay with true reſolution of ſpirit, Thou art the Son of God moſt high, thou art the King of incomprehenſible Majeſty, thou art the Lord of all. We will conſtantly adhere to thee, as thy faithful ſubjects. We will follow thee in faith and love, and patient obedience to the very death. And hope that as we feel, by thy*

power

power in us, we are the children of God, *ſo we ſhall be heirs, heirs of* God, *joynt-heirs, with thee, O bleſſed* Lord; *to whom, with the* Father *and the* Holy Ghoſt, *be glory and dominion for ever.* Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Concerning the Witneſſes *in general, and the Teſtimony of the FATHER in particular.*

IF any man urge us to receive a thing which is new and ſtrange, we either turn away our ears, if we take him for a frivolous perſon, or elſe require him to ſhow us good evidence for what he ſays, if he ſeem to be wiſe and ſerious. And the more importunate he is to be believed, the more earneſt we are to know what he hath to ſhow for himſelf, and to call for his proofs: in which if he fail or they come not home to the purpoſe, he is ſo far from gaining any credit with thoſe who examine them, that they prove a very conſiderable argument againſt him. Eſpecially when he pretends to come from God, and

to

to bring us meſſages from Heaven, we all expect the clearer and diviner demonſtrations, before we can reſign our mind unto him. For that which is to make all things credible, muſt have very pregnant Reaſons accompanying it to win credit to it ſelf. If that which ſtands as a reaſon for all that a man ſays, be not it ſelf grounded upon the cleareſt and moſt undeniable, it turns againſt him and proves nothing but a confutation of all that it was brought to aſſert.

Now *Jeſus* pretending not only to this honour of *coming from God* (which is a ſufficient Argument for any thing that he ſays in his Name) but alſo to an higher Dignity of being *his Son*; and ſo of being privy to all his ſecrets, of lying in his very boſom, and being inveſted with a power equal to the Almighties; if He and his Apoſtles (who affirmed the ſame of him, after he was put to death, and that as a Malefactor) ſhould be defective in their proofs of ſo lofty and weighty a pretenſion, *He* would be rendred of all other the moſt contemptible, and they become men moſt ridiculous, for obtruding him on the world in ſuch a quality, upon ſlight or no demonſtrations. For the greater and more

concern-

concerning any Aſſertion is, which we propound to mens belief, the ſtronger and more plentiful Arguments they juſtly expect to induce a perſwaſion. Which if they be wanting, it is ſo far from being a fault not to ſurrender their Souls to that propoſition; that it is a vertue to refuſe admittance, and they could not excuſe themſelves from a great guilt, ſhould they be ſo eaſie as to let it find entertainment. Nay, it is a commendable piece of caution and warineſs, to *ſuſpend* our belief in a matter of very great importance, though there be ſome conſiderable proofs offered; if they be not proportionable to the weight of the thing, unto which we are to deliver up no leſs than our Souls.

Let us ſee therefore what evidence this Follower and Favourite (as I may call him) of *Jeſus* produces and lays before us, to make good this, which he preached for a certain truth; that He is no leſs than the *Son of God.* Let us hear what his *Witneſſes* ſay, for ſo he calls his proofs, to this great point; and conſider whether they ſpeak ſo home to it, that we cannot reaſonably refuſe to believe it. The office of a *witneſs* is to give in all the evidence he can for the clearing of any matter in queſtion; for

forthis very end,that there by the controverſie may be decided upon his credit. When the Apoſtle therefore calls for his *Witneſſes*, who are ready he ſaith to juſtifie this which he aſſerts, if any body make a doubt of it, or be not well ſetled in this belief; his meaning is, that it relies upon ſuch ſolid grounds, that no man ſhall be able to deny *Jeſus* to be the *only begotten of the Father*, the *Chriſt of God*; unleſs he can diſprove the Authority of his witneſſes, which he was ſure would never be in any mans power to do, they were of ſuch known verity. If this be called in queſtion, whether *Jeſus* be the *Son of God* or no, if any liſt to bring it to trial, and examine it before the bar of impartial Reaſon; S. *John* here offers his *witneſſes*, faithful and juſt, of undoubted Truth and Integrity, who ſhall make it good: So that if you will hear them, and conſider what they ſay, and then give ſentence according to their evidence, you muſt needs judge that he is what he ſaid he was, The Son of God moſt high; and quit him in your Conſciences of all the calumnies & aſperſions of the *Jews*, who ſaid he was a deceiver of the people.

Now the *witneſſes* that he brings, you ſee,

ſee, dwell in two very diſtant places; *three* of them in the *Heavens*, and the other *three* in the *Earth*. From theſe two ſeveral regions they give their Teſtimony; the former from above, the later here beneath. For when the Apoſtle ſays that there are *three*, μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, *teſtifying or bearing witneſs in the Heaven*, and as many that do the ſame, ἐν τῇ γῇ, *on the Earth*; the meaning is not that the Firſt three gave their teſtimony to thoſe that are in Heaven, and the laſt three to thoſe that are on Earth: but that the Firſt three *witneſſes* are themſelves in Heaven, and the other three were on Earth, and ſo from thence they gave their teſtimony to *Jeſus*. They that dwell in Heaven delivered their teſtimony and juſtified this Truth from above, and the other reſiding on the Earth did there ſpeak to it, and make it good. Let us firſt hear theſe ſupreme and Heavenly *witneſſes*, and take under examination what they declare concerning him whom we acknowledge for our Lord, and what Authority he hath, according to their teſtimony, to exact all obedience of us, as he is the *Son of God*. And firſt of all let us begin with the witneſs of the *FATHER*: for the truth is, that as he is the *Firſt*, and the Beginning

of

of all things, ſo he did firſt teſtifie of *Jeſus*; and by his voice from Heaven proclaimed him to be his *Son*, before He, or any elſe was ſo bold as to affirm it. And as he being the *Firſt*, did bear witneſs to him, before any of the reſt ſpoke a word; ſo, according to the number of theſe Heavenly witneſſes, He gave his Teſtimony of him *three* times.

I.

The *firſt* time was when our Saviour began to appear publickly among the people; coming out of his privacy, *from Nazareth of Galilee to be baptized of John in Jordan.* He had no need indeed of that Baptiſm, as *John* affirmed and our Saviour did not deny: but as became one who had put himſelf into the ſtate of our meanneſs, and appeared in our ſinful fleſh, he would omit nothing that belonged to the duty of a pious perſon. And therefore he would have the Baptiſt do to him as he did to others, knowing that he exerciſed this Miniſtry by the appointment of God; whoſe inſtitutions ought to be reverenced, and to whoſe will all good men ought to conform themſelves. Now he had no ſooner given this example of humble obe-

Matt. 3. 13. Mark 1. 9.

dience,

dience, but as he came out of the Water, God the Father of Heaven declared him in expreſs terms to be what S. *John* here ſays he was, his *only Son.* Which teſtimony of his is recorded by no leſs than *three Evangeliſts,* as you may find if you read iii. *Matth.* 17. i. *Mark* 11. iii. *Luke* 22. who tells us that he ſaw the Heavens at that time, opened to him, and a Divine Glory come from thence and ſettle upon him, which was followed with a voice from Heaven, ſaying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed.* So S. *Matthew* reports the words of God the *FATHER* (from whom this voice came, it is plain, becauſe he calls *Jeſus* his *Son*) or as they may be rendred more emphatically, *This is that Son of mine, that beloved one* (whom the Prophets promiſed, particularly xlii. *Iſaiah* 1. God would ſend to them, as *Tertullian* well expounds it) who is moſt dear to me, and ſhall declare my whole will and pleaſure. There is a mark ſet before it, ἰδὲ, lo, or behold; that we may all attend and liſten diligently to this voice: for now *the word of God came to him* (as he ſpeaks in another place, I told you, concerning thoſe who were called Gods under the old Law, x. *John* 35.) and in an audible manner authorized him, to begin

to act as the Chriſt of God, whom He had anointed, as you ſhall hear, with the Holy Ghoſt, juſt at this moment, when He declared him his Son, by this voice from Heaven.

Which, if you carefully obſerve it, is expreſſed by the other Evangeliſts in ſuch a manner, that we may underſtand it was directed to himſelf; as that commiſſion which was ſent him from Heaven, to give him power to exerciſe the office of Gods ſupreme and only Miniſter in this world; in whom alone he was well pleaſed, and in none elſe, but by him. For S. *Mark* ſays the voice was in theſe words, *Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed.* Which plainly tell us that he ſpake *to Jeſus* (and not merely *of* him) that he might be confident He was the perſon whom God had now *ſanctified and ſent into the world.* And ſo S. *Luke* hath recorded it more fully and expreſly, *Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleaſed.* As if he had ſaid, Thou art the perſon to whom I have a favour above all others. I have anointed thee above all thy fellows: none that have had this name, are ſo dear to me as thou art; to whom I commit my authority, and inveſt with my power, and intruſt

intruſt with all my mind and will.

Now becauſe we all ſuſpect private Revelations, and think it no ſufficient ground to believe one that ſays God ſpake to him, unleſs he can bring ſome other very credible perſon beſides himſelf to atteſt that he alſo heard it, or be able otherways to demonſtrate it; God was pleaſed therefore, not only by other means to verifie this, but ſo to direct S. *Matthew*'s pen, that he hath as good as told us, that the voice which was directed to *Jeſus* himſelf (telling him he was his Son) was uttered likewiſe in the audience of *John Baptiſt*, a perſon famed for his ſanctity, reverenced by all the Nation of the *Jews*, and acknowledged to be a Prophet. Though it was delivered I believe in thoſe words and ſyllables wherein S. *Mark* or S. *Luke* have ſet it down, for as the Heavens were opened *unto him* (iii. *Matth.* 16.) and *he* ſaw the Spirit deſcending, ſo the voice which accompanied it, ſpake in all likelihood unto him; yet it being heard alſo by *John*, who had baptiſed him, and who ſaw all that went before it as he himſelf declared, it was as if God had ſaid to him, *This is my beloved Son*, &c. and therefore ſo S. *Matthew* relates it. The

Father Almighty by this voice awakened the attention of the Baptiſt, and bade him, as it were, mark it, that this perſon to whom he now ſpake was the Meſſiah; who now entred upon his office, being declared the Son of God, and ſhould *increaſe* and grow (as he preſently after diſcerned, iii. *John* 30.) till he came to be declared by the Reſurrection from the dead, *the Son of God with power* (as S. *Paul* ſpeaks, i. *Rom.* 4.) that is, with all the power belonging to his office, of Lord of all things, the great King of Heaven and Earth.

Till this time he knew no more of *the Chriſt*, but that he was coming, God having ordered him to make way for him; and that he ſhould immediately appear, and be ſo much ſuperior to him (iii. *Matth.* 11.) that he ſhould not be worthy to be one of his meaneſt ſervants: His countenance he was not acquainted withall, nor could he ſay, this is the perſon, when he met with him, as he himſelf confeſſes, i. *John* 31. But thus much he was told by him that ſent him to Baptize, as he there declares, *ver.* 33. that on whom he ſhould ſee the Spirit deſcend and remain, he ſhould conclude that perſon was the Meſſiah,

from

from whom they might expect the gift of the Holy Ghoſt, which had been ſo long a ſtranger to their Nation. And accordingly, having ſome intimation of him from the Spirit, as ſoon as *Jeſus* offered himſelf to receive his Baptiſm (iii. *Matth.* 14.) immediately after he was confirmed in his belief that this was the *Chriſt*, by the fulfilling of the former ſign (i. *John* 32.) And thereupon publiſhes it openly to all in theſe words, *ver.* 34. *I ſaw and bare record* (*i. e.* gave my teſtimony of him) *that this is the Son of God.* So God himſelf taught him to call our Saviour; for it ſhould ſeem by the words of S. *Matthew*, that he had this further ground to believe it, and ſo was furniſhed with greater ability to teſtifie it; that he *heard* the voice from Heaven as well as *ſaw* the Spirit deſcend upon him. Though the Father ſpake the words to *Jeſus*, yet it was in the preſence and hearing of this perſon (who was *ſent from God to be his witneſs*, i. *John* 6, 7.) and as if he had ſaid to him, *This is my beloved Son*; mind what I ſay; go and teſtifie that this is He in whom I delight above all others. Thou mayeſt be ſure of it, for I tell thee ſo, who gave thee all the Authority thou haſt. And accordingly you read that he went and did his office,

for which he was ſent; that is, *He bare witneſs of him, and cried, ſaying, This was he of whom I ſpake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me; for he was before me*, i. *John* 15. which he repeats in the ſame Chapter as his *record* (*ver.* 19.) in behalf of our Saviour, on two other occaſions, *ver.* 27. and 30. to let them know that the perſon of whom he gave this teſtimony before he was baptiſed of him, was now come, and exalted to a far higher dignity than himſelf, being a more *mighty* perſon, as the reſt of the Evangeliſts ſpeak, no leſs than the *Son of God.* This he means by being *preferred before him*, appointed by the Father of all to an incomparably more excellent office which he entred upon after the preaching and baptiſm of *John*; who began indeed his Miniſtry before *Jeſus*, but it was not becauſe he was greater, but rather becauſe he was leſs, and came to prepare his way, who was, as he acknowledges, Πρῶτός, the *firſt* of the two; not only in regard of his Divine Nature, but in regard of his ſublime office, into which he was now put, by being pronounced, *the beloved Son of God*, by this voice from Heaven.

Which the Devil himſelf, one would think heard, and underſtood to be ſuch a teſtimony concerning *Jeſus*, as committed

mitted the greateſt Miniſtry to him, and was a Divine warrant to go in Gods name to the world, as *Moſes*, after the Angel ſpake to him out of the buſh, did to the *Jews*. And therefore when immediately after this our Saviour was led by the Spirit into the wilderneſs, the Devil would have had him give ſome proof of his Divine power, as *Moſes* did, or rather ſhow himſelf, by a greater evidence than *Moſes* gave, to be greater than he: that he might be ſatisfied *Jeſus* was no leſs than the voice declared him, the *Son of God*. So you read iv. *Matth.* 3. that the firſt thing he ſaid to him was, *If thou be the Son of God, command that theſe ſtones be made bread.* As much as to ſay, Thou art now in a ſtarving condition (for he had taken no proviſion with him into the wilderneſs, reſolving to depend on that God who had expreſſed ſuch love to him, as to own him for his Son) here is a fit opportunity for thee to exerciſe thy power, if thou haſt any, by bidding theſe ſtones turn into loaves, which will be a greater wonder than *Moſes* his bringing Manna out of the clouds, and ſhow indeed that thou art God's Son. To which our Saviour anſwers, as you read in the next Verſe, out of *Moſes* himſelf (viii. *Deut.* 3.) and tells

him he might learn from that ſtory of the Manna, there was no need he ſhould imploy his power, which God had committed to him, on this faſhion; for as the *Iſraelites* were maintained in the wilderneſs after a miraculous manner, ſo might He who would prove himſelf to be his Son, not this way by turning ſtones into bread, but by truſting in God, and leaving him to provide for him as he thought good. That's his meaning when he ſays, *Man ſhall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.* And ſo in the following temptations he ſtill held to this, that he was ſufficiently ſatisfied he was God's Son, and would not demand any farther proof of it, but ſuch as he himſelf would give, who at laſt, *ver.* 11. ordered the *Angels to go and miniſter unto him.* To carry him food, it is like, and congratulate this his firſt victory over the enemy of mankind. Who was not ſo dull, but he learnt by this and many other things afterward, wherein he felt his power, that this voice from Heaven was no vain rumour, no empty inſignificant ſound, but a true report of the very mind of Almighty God: which he himſelf was forced to proclaim as loudly as any body elſe.

For

For you find him, not long after this, with a whole Legion of his companions, acknowledging *Jeſus* to be *the Son of God moſt high*, and with humble proſtrations *worſhipping him*, whom he had the confidence before to perſwade to worſhip himſelf; *crying with a loud voice for Gods ſake that he would not torment him*, v. *Mark* 6, 7, 8. viii. *Luke* 28. Nay, he was ſenſible, one would think, of this as ſoon as ever that temptation was ended. For you read that immediately after it, *Jeſus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee*, iv. *Luke* 14. and there at *Capernaum* met with a man that had *a ſpirit of an unclean Devil*, who *cried out with a loud voice, ſaying, I know thee who thou art, the holy one of God*, *ver.* 34. which is thus interpreted, *ver.* 41. The Devils came out of many, crying out, and ſaying, *Thou art Chriſt the Son of God: For they knew that he was Chriſt.* But our Saviour would not be beholden to them for their ſuffrage; it was ſufficient that God had declared him his Son, and that *John* Baptiſt atteſted as much, and that the *works which he did* (particularly his diſpoſſeſſing them of their ſtrongeſt holds) *bare witneſs of him.* And therefore he impoſed ſilence on them,

as

as the Evangeliſt there tells us; both becauſe they might by their loud acclamations to him, give the *Phariſees* occaſion to calumniate him, who were too forward to ſay he had confederacy with the Devil; and becauſe it was not fit this ſhould be publiſhed in ſo many words, no not by his Apoſtles (xvi. *Matth.* 20.) till after his Reſurrection and his Aſcenſion to the Throne of his glory, and the coming of the Holy Ghoſt; which demonſtrated he was completely *made both Lord and Chriſt*, as the Apoſtles then openly declared, ii. *Acts* 36.

But till then it ſeems to have been the work of the *Father* alone or principally to bear witneſs of him: for *John* Baptiſt was his *voice crying in the wilderneſs*, and the works our Saviour did were thoſe which his *Father had given him to finiſh*, and the Spirit was the *Finger of God*, which pointed men to him, as I may ſo ſpeak, and bid them receive him as his *beloved Son in whom he was well pleaſed*. And ſhall we not receive this for the greateſt Truth, when God himſelf ſays it? ſhall we not let *him* diſpoſe of our Faith? is not He the Truth? is it poſſible for *him* to falſifie or deceive? or do we imagine He cannot declare

clare his mind, and ſpeak to us as we do one to another? He that formed the mouth, cannot He ſpeak? is his power leſs than ours? can we manifeſt what we would have and make it underſtood, and cannot He in the ſame manner make us know his will and pleaſure? If his expreſs teſtimony then be of any force, here you have it, by an audible voice from Heaven: And *John* the Baptiſt, whom the *Jews*, the Enemies of our Saviour, durſt not but reverence, bare record to him thereupon, that *Jeſus is the Son of God.*

Now if any one ſhould ſay that the certainty of this relies upon the teſtimony of one ſingle perſon, and that it is poſſible he might hear amiſs (though there be no colour for ſuch an objection, he being a Prophet, and acknowledged ſo to be by thoſe who did not acknowledge our Saviour, yet) that this great truth might not depend upon the credit of *John* Baptiſt alone, though a man well acquainted with the manner of Divine Revelations; the *FATHER* was pleaſed a ſecond time, and in the audience of more witneſſes than one, to declare again what he had ſaid before, that he was his *Son.*

II.

This was in the Holy Mount, as you may read in the xvii. *Matth.* 5. and in the two following Evangeliſts, ix. *Mark* 7. ix. *Luke* 35. where the *Father* of all was pleaſed to declare in the ſame terms, as he had done at his Baptiſm, and with an audible voice, which aſtoniſhed thoſe that heard it (xvii. *Matth.* 6.) That he was his *beloved Son, in whom he was well pleaſed*: to which Declaration he added this command, *HEAR HIM.* That is, be aſſured that what he ſays to you, is the Truth; and what I ſpeak to the world, it ſhall be by his mouth. Now this voice was uttered in the hearing of no leſs than *three* perſons, whom our Saviour had ſelected from the reſt of his company to attend him unto this Mountain, where God appeared to bear witneſs to him. Of which three, this Diſciple S. *John* was one; who therefore might with the greater confidence urge here the Teſtimony of the *Father*, which he himſelf heard. And unleſs they to whom he writes this Epiſtle could find him falſe, and guilty of forgery in any other relation, they had no reaſon to call in queſtion his honeſty and faithfulneſs

neſs in this report: which is the more conſiderable, becauſe there were others who heard it as well as he, who might be appealed unto, and askt about it.

One of thoſe who were there preſent and heard it together with him, was S. *Peter*; a man timorous enough, and apt to deny a *Truth*, and therefore of no ſuch courage as to ſupport a *Lye*, with the danger of his life. Who writing to Chriſtian people, as S. *John* here doth, commends *this voice* to them as a ſure witneſs of that Truth, which he was ſhortly to ſeal with his Bloud; and profeſſes his own ſincerity in the relating of it. Read with attention 2 *Pet.* 1. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. where he tells them that our Lord having ſhown him he muſt ſhortly die (when it is no time to diſſemble with God or Man) he would endeavour to ſettle in their minds ſuch a ſolid ground of faith, that, when he was gone, they ſhould ſtand unſhaken, if they did but remember it: And that it was not a thing he had received by hear-ſay, much leſs a deviſed ſtory that had been forged in his own brain; but a matter of which he was an *eye and ear-witneſs*, of which he, and others alſo, had a certain, clear and perfect knowledge.

For

For they ſaw then the glory wherein *Je-ſus* was, and they heard the forename voice come from that excellent glory which could be no other but the glory o the Father. Then, and there in tha Mount, *Jeſus received from the Father ho-nour and glory*, when there came forth from the mouth of God this voice, in all their hearing; *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed.*

Here it will be neceſſary to take notice, that the voice, as all of them relate it, was directed not to him, but to thoſe who were there preſent with him. None of them ſay, that it ſpake thus, *THOU art my beloved Son*, &c. (according as S. *Mark* and S. *Luke* report the former voice) but they unanimouſly tell us in theſe *four* places, which I have named, that it was delivered in the other form, *THIS is my beloved Son*, &c. As if He ſpake to the company that attended him, and bade them obſerve that here He owned this perſon to ſtand in ſuch a relation to him, as he and *John Baptiſt* had profeſſed. The former voice might come for his ſake; but there being no need of *his* further ſatisfaction, this was for *theirs*; that they might ſtedfaſtly believe, and that they might be competent

competent witneſſes of him, and perſwade others to the belief of that, which upon their own certain knowledge they could affirm, was the very mind and will of God. I ſhall have occaſion hereafter to make a further enquiry into both theſe Teſtimonies which the Father gave to his Son *Jeſus*, and therefore I ſhall now diſmiſs them with ſome obſervations concerning this: which will much help to illuſtrate it, and add to the force of it.

The *Firſt* is, that our Saviour having at this time ſequeſtred himſelf, with three of his Apoſtles, into an high mountain to pray to God, was *transfigured before them as he was praying* (xvii. *Matth.* 2. ix. *Luke* 29.) ſo that *his face did ſhine as the Sun*, and his very garments were all *gliſtering*. Τὸ μέλλον μυσαγωγῶν (as S. *Greg. Nazianzen* ſpeaks*) ſhowing before-hand what he was to be hereafter; and making an introduction to the *glory* in which he ſhould ſhine, in the *high* and holy place at the right hand of the Father, where he makes perpetual *interceſſion* for us. For to *ſhine as the Sun* is a phraſe expreſſing ſomething belonging to celeſtial Majeſty in the Kingdom of the Father, xiii. *Matth.* 43. The white and ſplendid garments alſo,

* *Orat.* 35. p. 575.

alſo, it were eaſie to ſhow, were proper to Kings and thoſe who waited on them, iii. *Revel.* 4. The Miniſters and royal attendants in the Heavenly Court, were wont always to appear in ſuch radiant brightneſs; though ſhort of this wherein our Saviour now began to ſhine, as the King, ere long, of Heaven and Earth. For ſo S. *John* ſays, i. 14. *We beheld his glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father.* And S. *Peter* when he ſpeaks of this ſays, 2 i. 16. *We were eye-witneſſes of his* MAJESTY.

Of which, that they might be aſſured, this was a true repreſentation, you may obſerve, *ſecondly*, how they ſaw a very great Glory appear and approach towards them; called by S. *Mark* and S. *Luke* ſimply a *Cloud*, but by S. *Matthew* xvii. 5. a *bright cloud*: which had uſually been the token of the preſence of the Divine Majeſty. And therefore it is called by S. *Peter* in the place before named (*ver.* 17.) *the excellent or magnificent glory*: and the voice which came out of it, is ſaid (*ver.* 18.) to come *from Heaven*, becauſe it came forth from the preſence of God, of which this *bright cloud* was the viſible ſign. For ſo He appeared anciently to the *Iſraelites*, in a cloud

cloud that had a ſplendor or ſhining light in it, like to the hotteſt fire, which ſometimes brightly gliſtered and ſometimes was obſcured. So you read, xix. *Exod.* 18. that *the* LORD *deſcended in fire upon* the famous *Mount Sinai*, and a little after, xxiv. *Exod.* 16, 17. how the *glory of the Lord dwelt upon* that *Mount*, *and the cloud covered it* (*i. e.* the glory of the Lord) for the ſpace of *ſix days*: and then on *the ſeventh day He called unto Moſes out of the midſt of that cloud*: And the *aſpect of the glory of the Lord was as fire that burnt or glowed with great ardency in the ſight of the children of Iſrael.* That is, on the ſeventh day, that Glory was revealed and broke forth out of the cloud, wherein for ſix days it had been wrapped up and hidden from their ſight. And ſo you read in the xl. Chapter of that Book, that as ſoon as *Moſes* had reared up the Tabernacle for the conſtant habitation of this Divine preſence, the *cloud covered it*, and reſted upon it without, and the *glory of the Lord* filled it within (*ver.* 34, 35.) which is preſently after explained to be *a fire*, which by night appeared *upon the Tabernacle* to guide them in their journey. This is that bright flame, which frighted them when they murmured againſt *Moſes*, called *the glory*

of the Lord *appearing in the cloud* (xvi. *Exod.* 7, 10. and xvi. *Numb.* 42.) threatning to devour them if they were not more obedient. Such a glory, but more pure and more delightful to behold, there was now upon this *Holy Mount*, as S. *Peter* calls it: to make them apprehenſive that now they were in the preſence of God; who as he did on that Mount (to ſpeak in the words of *Tertullian*) initiate their *forefathers* in the Religion of *Moſes*, by ſhowing his glory and by his voice; ſo here on this * was going in the ſame manner to give teſtimony to *them* concerning his Son *Jeſus*, and to confirm them in the belief of whatſoever he ſhould teach them.

* *Agnoſce formam loci, &c. L. 4. adv. Marcionem, C. 22.*

For, *thirdly*, this was not *Muta Nubes*, as the ſame *Tertullian* there ſpeaks, a dumb cloud, a ſilent glory; but a voice came out of it, which was *Novum Patris teſtimonium ſuper filio*, the Fathers New teſtimony concerning his Son. In which teſtimony He was pleaſed to apply thoſe very words to *Jeſus*, which had been ſpoken by *Moſes* concerning a Prophet whom he had bid them look for after him. For in the xviii. of *Deuteronomy* he tells them from God himſelf (*ver.* 17.) that there ſhould be raiſed up to them a Prophet

phet like unto him, into *whoſe mouth* (*ver.* 18.) the Lord would *put his own words*, and *who ſhould ſpeak all that he ſhould command him*; *UNTO HIM SHALL YE HEARKEN*, *ver.* 15. as much as to ſay, Be ſure you attend to his words, and give obedience to them. Now theſe very words and ſyllables *HEAR HIM*, are, by that God who made that promiſe to *Moſes*, ſpoken in this place to the Diſciples with a manifeſt application to *Jeſus*: clearly denoting him to be the perſon whom *Moſes* foretold the Lord their God would ſend, to declare his mind unto them, as he himſelf already had done. And that this was really the voice of God, as much as that voice which ſpake to *Moſes*, we have the greater reaſon to conclude from this following, which is the *fourth*, obſervation.

That *Moſes* now ſtood by and heard it: and from thence learnt a great deal more than he knew when he wrote his Book; that this perſon of whom he ſpoke was more than *a Prophet*; being the *Son of Gods deareſt love*. For theſe words which declared him ſo, were ſpoken there where he was preſent: who durſt not contradict them, as ſure he would have done, had he

not known them to be the very voice o God and no deluſion.

I need not enlarge this; becauſe th Evangeliſts tell us ſo plainly, that not onl He appeared in glory talking with our Sa viour upon this Mountain, but *Elias* alſ accompanied him, which is next to b conſidered. Who being a great Prophe might pretend as fairly as any other man to be the perſon deſigned by *Moſes* in th words forenamed; and yet conſented b his ſilence to the ſame undoubted Truth that the prophecy of *Moſes* was not til now fufilled, but had its utmoſt comple tion in *Jeſus*. And indeed this voice from Heaven, making ſuch an open Proclama tion concerning *Jeſus*, before him that gave the Law, and before the chiefeſt of the Prophets who had aſſerted it, and be ing heard by them with the profoundeſt ſilence, without any contradiction; it did as good as tell the Apoſtles that they might be aſſured this was He of whom the Law and the Prophets had ſpoken, whom they were now to give ear unto; and that the Law and the Prophets muſt from hence forth give way to an higher Revelation from God, by this *Jeſus*. If this had not been true, we cannot but think that this great

great Zealot *Elias*, who had been always ſo *jealous for the Lord of hoſts*, (1 *Kings* xix. 14.) and this truſty ſervant of God, *Moſes*, who was ſo *faithful in all his houſe* (xii. *Num.* 7.) would have preſently entred their proteſtation againſt it; and required the Apoſtles in the Name of God, to give heed only to their voice, but not to this. Which now might the rather be believed to come from Heaven, becauſe theſe inſpired perſons reverence it, and dare not venture in the leaſt to ſpeak againſt it; when they were highly concerned ſo to do, if it had not been the voice of God.

And if any one ſhall ask, how theſe Diſciples could tell that theſe two were *Moſes* and *Elias*, whom they never ſaw; I think *Theophylact* hath well reſolved it: that they knew them not by their faces, but by their diſcourſe. Certain it is that perſons living in far diſtant Countries, known to others merely by their works and manner of writing, have, after a little converſe at an unexpected meeting, been challenged by the Names that their Books carried, without the help of any noted character in their face to diſtinguiſh them. Nothing is more common than the

ſtory of *Eraſmus*, whom his Friend here in *England* greeted by his name, after a few repartees paſs'd between them; though he had never ſeen him, and little thought then to embrace him. Now we are expreſly told by all the *three* Evangeliſts, that *Moſes and Elias talked with Jeſus*; and by S. *Luke*, that their diſcourſe was concerning his *deceaſe* or departure out of this world, which he ſhould accompliſh at *Jeruſalem*: and conſequently, it is very probable, of the glory that was to follow it by his Reſurrection. Which conference the Apoſtles hearing, they might eaſily know, though not ἀπ' εἰκόνων, by their pictures, which many of that Nation held it unlawful to be made, yet ἀπὸ τῶν λόγων, from their words and diſcourſe (wherein either *Jeſus* or they, before it was done, had occaſion to mention their Names or their offices, or to deſcribe their perſons) that they were none elſe but thoſe two men, who then appeared to them. And it is poſſible, as *Theophylact* adds, that *Moſes* might ſay, I acknowledge thee to be the perſon, whoſe death I prefigured, by the Lamb which was ſlain at the Paſſeover: And *Elias* might joyn with him and ſay, Thou art He whoſe Reſurrection I did likewiſe fore-

fore-ſhow, by calling again the Widow's ſon to life. Some ſuch kind of diſcourſe we may reaſonably conceive paſſed between them, whereby they diſcovered themſelves to be, the one the Law-giver, the other the nobleſt of all the Prophets: who now came to wait upon *Jeſus*, and acknowledge that he was greater than they; as the voice from Heaven preſently teſtified, which declared him the *beloved Son of God*, to whom now all muſt attend, as they had formerly done to them.

And therefore it is very remarkable (which is the laſt thing I ſhall obſerve) that no ſooner was this voice heard, but *Moſes* and *Elias* vaniſhed and were ſeen no more. As much as to ſay, That *Jeſus* alone was now to be *heard*; the Law and the Prophets were gone, and had nothing to do, but only to ſerve him. So S. *Mark* relates, ix. 8. that *ſuddenly when they had looked round about* (after the hearing of this voice) *they ſaw no man any more, ſave Jeſus only with themſelves.* They turned their eyes every way to look for *Moſes* and *Elias*, but there was no further news of them. Nay, S. *Luke* tells us, ix. 36. that in the very uttering of the voice from that Heavenly glory, they diſappeared. So

thoſe words, ἐν τῷ γενέσθαι τὴν φωνὴν, plainly ſignifie, *While the voice was ſpeaking Jeſus was found alone.* The clould out of which it came, covered them and took them into it. At the ſame time it opened it ſelf, to manifeſt him and to obſcure them: that it might be evident the voice ſpake of him alone and none elſe; there being no body but He to be ſeen by his Diſciples, when it came forth from the preſence of God. So you read in all the Evangeliſts, that the cloud which appeared, *over-ſhadowed them (viz. Moſes* and *Elias)* whereupon *the Diſciples were afraid* (as S. *Luke* tells us, ix. 34.) *as they* (that is, *Moſes* and *Elias*) *entred into the cloud*: imagining it is like that it would approach nearer, and ſpread it ſelf over them; who dreaded to enter into it, as they ſaw thoſe two perſons did. But there was no danger; it only parted *Moſes* and *Elias* from *Jeſus*, and left him alone, and then came the voice out of that cloud, where *Moſes* and *Elias* were with God, giving their aſſent to what it ſaid, *This is my beloved Son, hear him. Him*, I ſay, *Non Moſen jam & Eliam* (as *Tertullian* * I now obſerve interprets it) *Not Moſes and Elias; who were ſhown*, as his language is, *in the prerogative of brightneſs, and then diſmiſſed, as being now diſcharged*

* L. 4. adv. Marc. C. 22.

charged both of their office and of their honour.

Thus I have briefly explained the *ſecond* Teſtimony which God the Father gave him, in the audience of three of his Diſciples; who had a viſion alſo, at the ſame time, of the glory wherein he was to ſhine, after his departure out of this world. To which teſtimony, our Saviour would not have thoſe Diſciples, as yet to add theirs: but to keep this as a ſecret till he was *riſen again from the dead*, xvii. *Matth.* 9. It was fit for the *Father* alone to ſpeak *now*, from whom they were to learn what *Jeſus* was: that being fully ſatisfied *they* might be the better able to ſpeak of him *then*, upon their own knowledge; who had been eye and ear-witneſſes of the *honour and glory which he received from God the Father, when there came ſuch a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed. And this voice* (S. *Peter* I told you openly avers, 2 i. 17, 18.) *he and others heard, when they were with him in the holy mount.*

But if any one ſhould be ſo ſuſpicious and diſtruſtful, as to think that the Teſtimony of three perſons is not ſufficient, to beget

beget belief in us of ſuch a wonderful thing as this is, that God declared *Jeſus* to be his Son; though there is no juſt reaſon to doubt of any thing that is eſtabliſhed out of the mouth of but two good witneſſes, yet ſuch was the condeſcenſion of God the Father Almighty, that he was pleaſed a little before our Saviours deceaſe, which *Moſes* and *Elias* ſpake of, to give his teſtimony to him again, and to declare this more publickly, which was ſhortly to be proclaimed in all the world.

III.

For this *Third* voice which the Father was pleaſed to ſend from Heaven, to bear witneſs to him, was not heard by ſo few as two or three, but by a great multitude of people; which makes our belief of this Truth to rely ſtill upon ſurer grounds. For you read in the xii. *John* 1, 2, *&c.* that a great company of people having heard what a miracle our Saviour had wrought upon *Lazarus*, whom he raiſed from the dead a little before at a neighbouring town; flockt out of *Jeruſalem* to meet him, as he was coming thither to the feaſt of the Paſſeover. And being convinced that he was *that King of Iſrael* whom

whom the Lord by his Prophets had promiſed to ſend in his name, they met him with Palms of joy and triumph in their hands, and with the loudeſt acclamations of praiſe in their mouths; ſpreading their garments alſo in the way (as other Evangeliſts tell us) to do him the greater honour, and wiſhing him all proſperity in his new Kingdom. In this croud, or among the reſt of the people who were come to worſhip at the feaſt, there were *certain Greeks*, as you read *ver.* 20. who were deſirous *to ſee Jeſus*, whom the multitude thus magnified; and, it is likely, wiſh'd to have ſome proof given them, that he was ſuch a perſon as fame reported him.

Now the firſt thing our Saviour anſwers to thoſe who preſented them to him (which muſt be diligently noted) is that ere long He *ſhould be glorified.* But firſt he muſt take the Croſs in his way, and then the glory he ſhould attain thereby would be exceeding great; for his death would produce moſt precious fruit, and be the means of enlarging his Kingdom, and bringing innumerable ſuch Gentiles as theſe were, unto God, *ver.* 23, 24. And thereupon He perſwades his Diſciples

(*ver.*

(*ver.* 25, 26.) to adventure their lives, according to his example, for the good of mankind; which would redound alſo very much to their own honour. As they might ſee already in *Moſes* and *Elias* (who appeared, S. *Chryſoſtom* thinks, for this end among others, to ſtrengthen and encourage their Chriſtian reſolution in their ſufferings*) but ſhould be more fully ſatisfied when they ſaw him aſcend to that glory after his ſufferings, of which they had beheld but a ſhadow, when thoſe two illuſtrious perſons came to wait upon him. A difficult work indeed it was, at the thoughts of which He himſelf could not but be ſomething ſad (*ver.* 27.) and wiſht, according to the inclinations of Nature, there were ſome other way, if God pleaſed, to deliver mankind. But ſince he had ſent him into the world for this end, that he ſhould lay down his life for our Redemption, he reſolves preſently to ſubmit to God, and deſires only this one thing of him, *ver.* 28. *Father, glorifie thy Name.* As much as to ſay, I know thou art my *FATHER*, and ſince it is thy pleaſure, to which I will always ſubmit; behold, I offer my ſelf now to be an inſtrument of thy glory by my paſſion, as I have been hitherto by my preaching, and the

* Παραμυθήσασθαι πρέπον ἦν ἐκείνους δεδοικότας τὸ πάθος. *Hom.* 56. *in Matth.*

the works thou haſt done by my hands. I am content to receive the glory which I expect, and juſt now told my Diſciples I ſhall receive, in this way of humble ſuffering thy will and pleaſure. I am deſirous *thou* ſhouldeſt firſt be glorified; and if my death will ſerve that end, I am ready to part with my life, for I know thou wilt be much more glorified by my Reſurrection and Aſcenſion to Heaven. There is no reaſonable doubt to be made of the truth of this interpretation; for they *glorifie God* moſt remarkably who die for the teſtimony of the Truth, xxi. *John* 19. It is a great honour to him, that they love him more than their lives, and will take his word for their recompenſe, in an inviſible world. This our Saviour himſelf calls, *Gods being glorified in him*, xiii. *John* 31. and therefore I make no queſtion he deſires here, that his Fathers Name may be glorified by the ſame means.

Now to this humble requeſt of his, God the Father replies, by a voice from Heaven, ſaying, *I have both glorified it, and will glorifie it again.* You remember what S. *Peter* ſays in the place often cited already, 2 i. 17. that our Lord by the former voice from Heaven, *received honour and*

glory

glory from God the Father; and there is as much cauſe to think that in this there was the ſame deſign, to do him honour by a declaration of the glory he ſhould ſhortly receive, at the right hand of God. The very connexion of theſe words with the foregoing, will not let us expound them otherwiſe. For having told his Diſciples, the *Son of man ſhould ſhortly be glorified*, but firſt he muſt *glorifie God* by his paſſion, and then he doubted not but *God would glorifie him with himſelf* (as he ſpeaks, xiii. 32.) that is, by the very ſame means, glorifie both himſelf and his Son, who had glorified him: Yes, ſays God himſelf from Heaven, *I have both glorified my Name* (by what he had done for *Jeſus*, and by him) *and will glorifie it again*, by that which remained ſtill to be done.

And indeed (1.) it did him a great honour, that God was pleaſed to return any anſwer to him, who had before called himſelf *his Son* (x. 36.) and had juſt now addreſſed himſelf to him as his Father; calling upon him twice by this Name, *Father, ſave me from this hour*, ver. 27. *Father, glorifie thy Name*, ver. 28. It was as much as to ſay, He owned the relation, allowed his pretences, and intended to juſtifie

juſtifie them more and more by his Divine approbation. For (2.) the Anſwer it ſelf is a plain promiſe of the honour he would confer upon him hereafter, by his Reſurrection and Exaltation; when he *again glorified himſelf*, by glorifying the Lord *Jeſus*. You read expreſly in the foregoing Chapter, that the Glory he had gotten *before*, was by glorifying of his Son; for he ſays (xi. 4.) the ſickneſs of *Lazarus* was *for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby*. And therefore when he ſays he will glorifie himſelf *again*, the meaning is, that as they had *ſeen his glory* (xi. 40.) in the raiſing of *Lazarus* from the dead, and in all the other miraculous works which *Jeſus* had done, for which the people gave him glory (v. *Luke* 26. vii. 16. xix. 37.) So he would glorifie himſelf more by the Reſurrection of *Jeſus* himſelf from the dead, and by his Exaltation to an Heavenly Kingdom. For it was the *working of the might of his power* (as the Apoſtle S. *Paul* ſpeaks, i. *Epheſ.* 19.) which he *wrought in Chriſt, when the Father of glory raiſed him from the dead, and ſet him at his own right hand in the Heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but alſo*

ſo in that which is to come. Now he *glorifi-ed his Son Jeſus* indeed, as S. *Peter* ſpeaks, iii. *Acts* 13. *and gave him a name which is above every name,* that every knee ſhould bow to him, and every tongue confeſs him to be the Lord: but it was *to the glory of God the Father,* as S. *Paul* tells us expreſly, ii. *Philip.* 11. Hereby he *glorified his own name,* as by this voice from Heaven he ſaid he would; whoſe power, goodneſs, and wiſdom, will be for ever magnified and celebrated with the higheſt praiſes, by the whole Chriſtian Church, for ſetting ſuch a glorious Prince over them, who is not *aſhamed to call them Brethren,* and yet hath *all things put in ſubjection under his feet*; that he may protect, ſuccour and bleſs them, here and eternally.

Now by making this promiſe to the Lord *Jeſus,* of glorifying himſelf by glorifying him, in this manner; He plainly bare witneſs to him, that he was what he pretended to be; very dear to him, his only begotten Son, and no deceiver, as they falſely and blaſphemouſly ſaid, who were loth to be governed by him. They ought preſently to have glorified God, by honouring his Son, and acknowledging him for their Lord and Maſter: who had

had ſuch power with God already, that he would give him whatſoever he askt (xi. *John* 22.) and was ſhortly to receive greater, even all power in Heaven and in Earth, xvii. 1, 2.

For this voice, you may obſerve, was uttered at ſuch a time, and ſo loud, that the people who ſtood by heard it, *ver.* 29. Thoſe who were at ſome diſtance indeed, hearing only the ſound, thought it had been a clap of thunder: but they who were nearer, heard it ſo diſtinctly, that they were of opinion, *an Angel ſpake to him.* God, that is, by the Miniſtry of an Angel. For what is ſaid in one place of Scripture to be done by Angels, who are his principal ſervants, is in another ſaid to be done by God. As *the Angel of the Lord* we read, vii. *Acts* 30. *appeared to Moſes in the buſh*, and in the next verſe, it is the *voice of the Lord* which from thence is ſaid to come to him. In like manner the *Angel* is ſaid (*ver.* 38.) to *ſpeak with him in mount Sinai*; where, we are told in the book of *Exodus* xix. 20. the *Lord came down and called Moſes up to the top of the Mount*, and there ſpake to him; as here he did to our Saviour. Who tells the people it was not for his ſake, that God

ſpake now to him; it was for theirs; whom he would have to know that when he was *lifted up from the Earth* (by hanging upon the Croſs, which was a ſtep, contrary to all mens opinion, to his Exaltation in the Heavens) *he would draw all men to him*: bring even the Gentile world into ſubjection to him, and bow their hearts to acknowledge his Divine authority, which the *Jews* oppoſed. He needed no further confirmation of this truth himſelf, who knew how dear he was to God, and that he would *glorifie his Name* in him; but that his Diſciples might be more confident of it, and the people more inclined to believe it when they heard it preached, God ſpake the very ſame now in the ears of a great many, which he had done before to him and a few beſides in the former voices from Heaven.

It is true indeed, He is not called here *Gods beloved Son*, in expreſs terms, as he is in the other places. But this is ſo plainly ſuppoſed, and ſtrongly inferr'd, as I ſaid, from the voice which now ſpake, that it puts the matter out of doubt, as much as the former. If he had falſely and proudly laid claim to this high relation to God, whom he calls his Father, we may

may be confident God would never have honoured him with ſuch an anſwer; but either have been ſilent, or ſaid the quite contrary: telling him, before all the company, that he would not glorifie himſelf by preferring, but by putting to ſhame ſuch an one as he, who thus arrogantly took upon him to be the Son of God. It is contrary to all reaſon to think that God would ſtoop to *ſeek the glory* of any perſon (as our Saviour expreſſes the honour he had done him, viii. *John* 50.) but one who ſtood ſo nearly related to him, as to be his Son: and therefore worthy to be glorified by him again and again, until He had fully *judged*, as he there ſpeaks, between Him and his Adverſaries; who denied him to be the Chriſt, but was pronounced by God to be the Prince of life.

To conclude this, you may note that not long before God ſpake in this manner from Heaven to them, our Saviour had ſaid, That they *had not heard his voice* at any time, v. *John* 37. *John* the Baptiſt had, and ſo had three of his Diſciples. And therefore *John* bare witneſs of him; *whoſe teſtimony*, he ſays, *was true* (*ver.* 32.) though he did not ſtand in ſuch need of it, as if his credit could not be ſuppor-

ted without it. No, He appealed to him, merely becauſe they had ſuch an high opinion of him, *ver.* 33, 34. otherwiſe he *had a greater teſtimony than that of John* (*ver.* 36.) which was not only the *works that he did, which teſtified of him, that the Father had ſent him*: but *the Father himſelf who ſent him* (note this, for he appeals now to what the voice from Heaven ſaid) *he hath born witneſs of him, ver.* 37. And if they had had any goodneſs in them (*ver.* 38.) they would have received him *whom the Father ſent.* When did He ſend him, but when he ſpake by that voice from Heaven? which now he utters once more in other words, for their greater and fuller ſatisfaction, when many of them were aſſembled together; that they, who had not hitherto, might hear his voice as well as *Jeſus* himſelf and his Apoſtles; and be awakened hereby to attend to what the other witneſſes of him ſhould ſay, eſpecially after he was riſen from the dead.

I ſhould paſs now to the Examination of one of them, were it not fit, before I part with this, to take notice of a Tradition which runs among the *Jews*, concerning this way of Revelation *by a voice* from Heaven; which they ſay was very uſual

in

thoſe ages. *The Doctors deliver* (ſo their words are in the *Babylonian Talmud* *) *that from the death of the latter Prophets, Haggai, Zachariah and Malachy, the Holy Ghoſt was taken away: but yet notwithſtanding they had the Miniſtry of the Bath Col, i. e.* the daughter of a voice. By that name they call this way of Revelation, becauſe they ſay it was not a full and ſtrong voice which they heard, but a voice coming out of another voice, and heard when it was gone. Juſt as ſparks, ſay they, are called *Bene reſheph*, the ſons of an hot coal, becauſe they leap out of the fire; ſo is this called the *daughter of a voice*, becauſe it reſulted from a voice, and came, as it were, out of the womb of it: being a kind of Eccho after ſomething that was ſpoken, which they could not underſtand; but only caught hold of this tail, as I may call it, and concluſion of it. And they would have us believe, that as under the firſt Temple they had the benefit of *Prophecy*, *Urim and Thummim*, and the *Holy Ghoſt*; ſo this ſucceeded them under the ſecond Temple, and was proper to that age of the world: being then only in uſe, when all the other were wanting. Hence many Chriſtian writers of theſe latter times, have fancied that God there-

* In the title *Sanhedrim*, cap. 1.

fore declared *Jeſus* to be his Son by a voice from Heaven, becauſe it was the only way wherein he then communicated his mind to the *Jewiſh* Nation. *Paulus Fagius* I think was the firſt that ſtarted this notion of the *Bath col*: which was *a præludium he imagines to that true, Divine and Heavenly voice, which was to ſpeak to them indeed from Heaven; that is, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. To whom the Bath col it ſelf gave teſtimony, when it ſaid, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleaſed. But its name ſhows it was not the true voice from Heaven, but a mere type, ſignification and teſtimony of that true voice and word of God, which was to come ſhortly and ſpeak to them. To whom alone this Bath col told them they muſt all hearken.* Thus he writes upon the *Chaldee* Paraphraſe *. And he had ſaid the ſame before in his notes upon the *Fifth* Chapter of *Pirke Avoth*, where his words are, that *God would accuſtom the world a little by this beginning, to that true Heavenly voice, our Saviour Chriſt, who was to follow; in whom hereafter the Father would be heard.*

* In xxviii. Exod. 30.

But I think there is reaſon to doubt of all that the *Jews* ſay about this matter: their brags being many times beyond the

Truth,

Truth, and deviſed to obſcure the glory of our Saviour. Who it is moſt likely had that honour done him now by theſe voices from Heaven, which was not uſual in thoſe days; for he himſelf tells them, as I obſerved before, *Ye have not heard his voice at any time*, v. *John* 37. As for that which they pretend, that this *Bath col*, or daughter of a voice was peculiar to the times of the ſecond Temple, it is ſo far from Truth, that it is contradicted by ſome of themſelves: who find inſtances of the contrary in the Holy Books. God called out of Heaven to *Abraham*, every body knows, by his Angel, *Gen.* xxii. 11, 15. And *Maimonides* * obſerves, that he ſpake to *Hagar* and *Manoah*'s wife; though neither of them, he ſays, had any thing of the ſpirit of prophecy, but only heard the *Bath col*. Which interpoſed, if we could believe others, in the caſe of *Thamar*. And often whiſpered to *Moſes*, as the writer of his Life, in many places, affirms. Nay, they tell us in the *Eleventh* Chapter of the forenamed Title in the *Talmud*, that *Nebuzaradan* heard this *Bath col* (before the deſtruction of the firſt Temple) bidding him make a freſh aſſault upon *Jeruſalem*, and not be diſcouraged in his attempt, nor fear the fate of *Senacherib*;

* *More Nevoch. part* 2. *cap.* 42.

For the time is at hand that the Sanctuary ſhall be deſtroyed, and the Temple burnt.

But that there was any ſuch thing under the ſecond Temple, I ſee no ground at all to believe. It is far more probable that they have deviſed a number of ſuch ſtories as we read in their Books, merely to gain ſome credit and reputation to their Doctors. Can any man of ſence imagine that God would bid *Jonathan* hold his hand when he was beginning to Paraphraſe upon the Prophets; ſaying to him by a voice from Heaven, *Who is this that reveals my ſecrets to the ſons of men?* And that he, like a bold fellow, ſtood up and ſaid, *I am the man, who undertake it for thy honour, and not my own?* And yet *Elias Levita* has the confidence to tell us, in his Preface to theſe Paraphraſes, that as *Jonathan* was going to do as much for the *Holy writings* (as they call them) as he had done for the *Prophets*, he was abſolutely prohibited by another voice from Heaven, which ſaid, *Is it not ſufficient that thou haſt divulged the myſteries of the Prophets, but thou wilt proſtitute alſo the ſecrets of the Holy Ghoſt?* So the good man deſiſted, and durſt not do the Angels any further ſervice; who came to liſten to him as he was expounding

the

the Prophets. Which is as true, I make no doubt, as all the reſt: and we may as well believe the *Earth quaked for forty mile together*, when he began his Paraphraſe, and that if a fly did but ſit upon his Book in which he wrote, *fire came down from Heaven* and deſtroyed it, leaving the Book untoucht, as believe a ſyllable of theſe voices ſpeaking from Heaven to him, for they have all the very ſame Authors. Who having got this by the end, know not when to have done with it; but tell us for the honour of *R. Chanina*, who ſaw the deſtruction of the laſt Temple by *Titus*, that a voice came from Heaven, which ſaid (as *David Ganz* reports it in his Chronology *) *The whole world is ſuſtained for the ſake of R. Chanina my ſon.* A very likely matter, that he ſhould lay an obligation on ſo many, and no body know it but this obſcure writer. Why did not all the world follow *him*, as they did *Jeſus*, if he were God's Son, and they ſo much indebted to him? This is but a wretchedly dull counterfeit of what they had read of our Saviour, who was *Gods Son*, *Upholding all things by the word of his power*, i. *Hebr.* 2, 3. And ſo are the other tales they tell in the Talmudical Title ſo often named, Chapter the firſt, of a *Bath col* which came from

* *Ad An.* 4768.

from Heaven as the wiſe men ſat in Council at *Jericho*, ſaying, *There is one here who is worthy that the Divine majeſty or glory* (by which they mean ſometime the *Holy Ghoſt*) *ſhould reſt upon him, as it did on Moſes; but the age wherein he lives is not worthy of that favour.* Whereupon they all caſt their eyes on *Hillel* a famous man among them. And of another voice as they were ſitting together at *Jafne*, which ſaid the very ſame words again; and turned all their eyes towards *R. Samuel* the leſs. And, to name but one more, *R. Juda* the *Holy* Doctor, they would have it believed, was aſſured by this voice from Heaven, that his Prayer was heard, juſt as our Saviours was in the place I have before open'd. For when he was dying (and it was not many days before our Saviour's death, that he prayed in thoſe words, *Father, glorifie thy name*) *he lift up his ten fingers and ſaid, Lord of the world, it is known to thee that I have laboured in the Law with my ten fingers, and have not received the leaſt advantage thereby, no not in my little finger. May it pleaſe thee, that I may have peace in my reſt.* And then out came the *Bath col* ſaying thoſe words of *Iſaiah* lvii. 2. *He ſhall enter into peace: they ſhall reſt in their beds.* Which, together with all other

other of the ſame kind, deſerve to be put under no other *Title*, than that of the *Jewiſh Fables* (mentioned by S. *Paul*, i. *Tit.* 14.) or *old-Wives tales* (1 *Tim.* iv. 7.) wherewith little children are wont to be entertained: being invented, it is likely, in imitation of the Goſpel ſtory, to adorn and ſupport the ruinous doctrine of their Rabbins, and to bring it into ſome eſteem with their ſottiſh poſterity.

But we may as well believe the idle tale which the factious *Donatiſts* told concerning the Father of their Sect; *to whom God gave an anſwer from Heaven*, they ſaid, as he was praying to him: as give ear to this Fable of *R. Judah*, who muſt be magnified by them becauſe he was the compiler of their traditional Law. And as for *R. Samuel* the leſs, whom I mentioned before, he was the man who compoſed the famous Prayer againſt Hereticks for their publick Devotions; wherein they deſire God that he would *deſtroy all Hereticks*: whereby they mean Chriſtians, who began in thoſe days to grow apace. And therefore it is no wonder that he is cried up to the skies, and muſt be honoured with praiſes from Heaven. But the beſt of it is, theſe petty ſtories want vouchers; or

Auguſt. Tract. 13. in Johan.

thoſe

thoſe who offer themſelves had need to bring ſome better men to be bound for their honeſty. They have no *John* Baptiſts to atteſt any thing, much leſs ſuch men as the Apoſtles, who with the power of Miracles and Prophecy, were ready on all occaſions to pawn their lives, that they did not *follow cunningly deviſed Fables*, when *they made known the power and coming of our Lord Jeſus, but were eye-witneſſes*, as you have heard, *of his Majeſty, and heard the voice when they were with him in the holy Mount, which ſaid, This is my well beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed.* Thoſe *Maſters* in *Iſrael* alſo are not ſo *cunning* in their contrivances, nor ſuch maſters of their craft, but they forget the old Rule which admoniſhes *a Lyar to have a good memory.* For they contradict themſelves, while they tell us this *Bath col* was but the fag end of a voice, a kind of Echo leaping out of another voice; and yet make it deliver ſuch long ſentences. And what likelihood is there that God ſhould grace ſuch men as they, who had turned their Religion into vain janglings and idle diſputes (witneſs the quarrel between the School of that *Hillel* now mentioned, and the School of *Schammai*) with ſuch *Elogiums* from Heaven, as were fit to be given only

only to the beſt of men, yea, to the Son of God himſelf?

One of theſe *four* things is far more probable. Either that their latter writers have ſtrained the words of their forefathers too far, who meant perhaps no more by their hearing a *Bath col*, but that the thing whereof they write, was as evident to them, as if they had had a Divine teſtimony for it. For in *Pirke Avoth* I obſerve *R. Joſhuah* ſays, that *jotzeth Bath col, the daughter of a voice goeth forth day by day from mount Horeb, and proclaims, ſaying, Wo to men becauſe of their contempt of the Law.* Which can ſignifie no more, but that if men would liſten to the Law which God gave there, they would hear how dangerous it is to diſobey it. Or, *ſecondly*, there was ſomething of a conjuration in it. For in *Pirke Elieſer* I find *, that when there was a diſpute only about the Leap-year, the Governour of the School pronounced the Name with four Letters, and preſently they heard a voice, ſaying, *The Lord ſpake to Moſes and Aaron*, &c. As if they could have this voice, whenſoever they did but pronounce that ſingle word. Or, *thirdly*, they were men of a ſtrong imagination, which made them

* *Chap.* 8.

them fancy they heard a voice from Heaven, when it was only a blaſt of melancholy fumes and vapours whiſtling in their brain. For this may be a fair account of thoſe, who thought, as ſome among us have done, that they heard ſuch or ſuch a place of Scripture ſounding in their ears, as an anſwer to their prayers or their doubts. Or, *laſtly*, there being many *Jews* in our Saviours time and afterward, who knew very well what had been reported of him, but yet continued ſworn enemies to his Religion; they ventured to report the ſame of their own Doctors, and perſwaded the people that they were approved by voices from Heaven, and therefore ought to be received by all poſterity as men of a Divine ſtamp, who had the higheſt teſtimony from Almighty God.

This I am ſure of, there is nothing to make it credible that any man among them in thoſe Ages was thus honoured by God. No body appears that dare ſay they heard it. Nor does any of them pretend that they ſaw theſe *Rabbies* ſhine in the leaſt glimpſe of ſuch glory as our Saviour did, when he was honoured with that glorious teſtimony from Heaven, which pronounced him the Head of all principa-

lity

lity and power. Much leſs were they, as S. *Luke* ſpeaks, by *many infallible proofs* (for we rely not upon the voice from Heaven by it ſelf alone) declared to be the men of God. And therefore, that which to me ſeems neareſt to the truth in this matter is, that there had been a perfect, deep ſilence ſince the death of the latter Prophets, and no Revelation made of Gods mind, of any ſort whatſoever, in that Nation, till *John* the Baptiſt came, who was filled with the Holy Ghoſt, and ſent by God in the ſpirit and power of *Elias* to prepare the way of our Lord. Who when he firſt appeared had ſuch an approbation given him by God the Father, in the audience of *John*, as had not been vouchſafed to any perſon; and in ſuch a manner (by a voice from Heaven) as had not been in uſe for many ages; but yet was the moſt ancient way of his communicating his mind to men. Thus God called to *Adam* in the Garden, and thus he ſpake to *Abraham*, and *Moſes*, and *Samuel*; and therefore ſo he now ſpeaks to him who was the *ſecond Adam*, the true *ſeed* promiſed to *Abraham*, the Prophet like to *Moſes*: Teſtifying both to him and to others by his own voice from Heaven (which was the old way of Revelation before

fore all others, and a clearer way there cannot be) that he was his only begotten Son.

And here perhaps it may not be amiſs to obſerve, that this voice anciently was very low, like a ſmall whiſper in ones ear: whereas the voice to our Saviour was loud and ſtrong, making a great noiſe in the ears of thoſe that heard it. So *Eliphaz* tells us, iv. *Job* 16. that in a viſion which he had, *There was ſilence, and I heard a voice.* The *Hebrew* is exactly rendred by *Mercer*, *I heard ſilence and a voice*; that is, a ſtill voice, as the Margin of our Bible hath it. And ſo *Elias* is ſaid to hear a *voice of ſilence*, 1 *Kings* xix. 12. *a ſtill ſmall voice*, as we render it; a ſpeech next to ſilence, which did but whiſper very low, and made no noiſe at all in his ears. On the contrary you read in the place laſt expounded (xii. *John*) the voice which ſpake of our Saviour was ſo loud and audible, that the people, who were at ſome diſtance, thought it had been a clap of thunder. It did not ſilently creep into their ears, but rent the clouds to make its way with a great deal of power and force into them. I cannot ſay that the other voice was ſo loud, which the Diſciples heard on the

holy

holy Mount, but it was ſo clear and piercing, that when they heard it (xvii. *Matth.* 6.) they were aſtoniſhed, and fell flat upon their faces. The light wherein he appeared was not more viſible than the voice which teſtified to him was audible; and both were very amazing. Which may very well denote the excellency of our Saviours perſon, and the efficacy of his doctrine, above all that had been before him. He declared Gods mind more fully and perfectly, and ſpake it more plainly and perſpicuouſly. He tranſcended all others in both theſe, as much as a full voice is above a little murmur or whiſper in the ear; or a ſpeech diſtinctly pronounced, is to be preferred before the liſping of imperfect words.

But whatſoever become of this, we may certainly conclude from the audibleneſs and clearneſs of the voice, whereby God gave his teſtimony to *Jeſus*, that they are the more to be believed, who affirm they heard this voice from Heaven and report it to us; it not being eaſie for them to be deceived. This voice was like that of an Herald who proclaims a Prince; and it ſaid, in effect, *I have ſet my King upon my holy hill of Sion, Thou art my Son, this*

day have I begotten thee. Which had a moſt eminent and full completion at his Reſurrection and Exaltation; but began to be fulfilled when he was tranfigured upon this *holy hill,* and had a repreſentation of his future glory made to him. Which he did not aſſume to himſelf, as the Apoſtle diſcourſes, v. *Hebr.* 4, 5. but was called unto it by him that ſaid *then, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*; and ſaid *now, This is my well beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed, hear him.*

And thus you ſee, having made an enquiry into the Teſtimony of one of theſe *Witneſſes,* the *firſt* and greateſt, we find it ſo full and clear on his behalf, that we muſt either disbelieve God, or elſe believe in *Jeſus,* and receive him for the Son of God. For he received more than once *honour and glory* from God the Father. Who was ſo highly *glorified alſo by Him,* that he hath now completely *glorified him with himſelf,* and therefore expects that his Name ſhould be perpetually glorified and praiſed by us, in ſome ſuch words as theſe.

A Prayer.

ADored be thy love, O Lord of Heaven and Earth, adored be thy great and wonderful love, which hath thus glorified thy Son Jeſus; *and given us ſuch abundant ſatisfaction, that in him thou art well pleaſed. Lord, what is man that thou ſhouldeſt ſpeak from Heaven, with ſo much kindneſs to him! that thou ſhouldeſt ſo often tell us, thou haſt ſent thy dearly beloved Son, in great humility to viſit us! what an amazing love is this, that thou ſhouldeſt admit any of us into ſuch a familiarity with thy ſelf, as to hear thy voice, and behold the brightneſs of thy glory? Our heart ought to anſwer thee again, with the voice of joy, thankſgiving and praiſe. Thy high praiſes ought to be in all our mouths. It becomes us to ſay continually, with the moſt elevated minds and hearts, Glory be to thee, O Lord; Glory be to thee, O Lord: who dwelleſt on high, and yet humbleſt thy ſelf to behold the things that are in Heaven and in Earth. For ever be thy Name glorified by us and by all mankind; who haſt honoured our*

Nature so highly in the person of thy only begotten Son Christ Jesus: *whom after thou hadst several ways glorified on Earth, thou hast now advanced to the Throne of thy glory in Heaven.*

The hearts of all mankind, with all the love they have, is too small a Sacrifice to be offered unto thee: whose love is like thy self, far beyond all that we are able to express. O that our love and affection to thee were so likewise! a most grateful resentment of thy kindness to us, greater than can be uttered! O that our minds and wills, to make some poor expressions of their thankfulness, may most humbly bow themselves and perfectly stoop to thee; who hast thus graciously condescended unto us! That we may, with the most thankful hearts, receive thy testimony concerning thy Son! sincerely reverence him as our Lord and Saviour! and obediently hearken to his voice; believing his Revelations, following his Instructions; submitting to his Precepts, and rejoycing for ever in the comfort of his precious Promises.

There is all reason that we should thus study to approve our selves to thee. And it is our interest also to be careful to fulfil all righteousness *as our Saviour did: That we may*

have

have the teſtimony of a good Conſcience at preſent, and a joyful hope to be openly commended and praiſed by thee hereafter; when we ſhall hear that voice of the King *of glory, calling to us, and ſaying,* Come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. *Amen.*

CHAP. III.

Concerning the Teſtimony of the WORD.

IT is time now to proceed to the Examination of the next Witneſs, which is the WORD, and to weigh the evidence which He gives concerning *Jeſus*: that is, concerning him who was born of the bleſſed Virgin *Mary*, and called by that Name; who ſaid, He was the *Son of God*. I make no doubt but we ſhall find his teſtimony as full and as ſtrong as the former to verifie this; when we have in a few words (according to my intended brevity) declared, who this WORD is, who now comes and deſires to be heard as a Witneſs for *Jeſus*.

And we are told by this very Apoſtle in the firſt Verſe of his Goſpel, that the WORD is a Divine being, which had

a ſubſiſtence in the beginning of all things. For he was then *with God*, the World was made by him, and therefore *He was God*. That is, God of God the Father; to whom "he hath ſuch a relation (to ſpeak in the "words of S. *Greg. Nazianzen*) as a word "or inward thought hath to the mind. "Not only in regard of his generation, "without any paſſion, but becauſe of his "intimate conjunction with Him, and of "his power to declare Him. For the Fa- "ther is known by the Son; who is a "brief and eaſie demonſtration of the na- "ture of the Father, as every thing that is "begotten is σιωπῶν λόγος, *the ſilent Word* "of that which begat it.

Διὰ τὸ συναφὲς καὶ τὸ ἐξαγγελτικόν. *Orat.* 36.

Now this WORD, whom the Ancients call the Eternal *Reaſon*, the *Wiſdom*, the *Power* of the Father, S. *John* there tells us, *ver.* 14. *was made fleſh*; and became ſo related to that Man who was born of the Bleſſed Virgin, as to dwell in Him, and be made one with Him. A myſtery, as *Gregory Thaumaturgus* excellently ſpeaks, which *is to be adored, not ſcrupulouſly and nicely weighed; to be diſcourſed of in Divine words, not meaſured by humane reaſons.* And therefore I ſhall ſay no more of it; but that from hence it is that afterward, the

Περσκυνήμων καὶ ζυγοστάθμων, &c. *Serm.* 3. *in Annunc.*

the whole perſon *God-man* is called the WORD, as you read in the very entrance of this Epiſtle of S. *John*. Where the WORD is deſcribed to be ſuch a perſon as may be *ſeen*, and *felt*, and *handled*, as well as *heard*. And He is very properly called by this Name, becauſe it is his office to declare the mind and will of God to men (as we by our ſpeech declare ours one to another) which otherways we could not know. *For no man hath ſeen God at any time* (i. John 18.) *the only begotten Son, which is in the boſom of the Father, he hath declared him.*

In theſe words we have a plain and full account, why our Lord *Jeſus* is called the WORD of God. Not merely becauſe he hath revealed to us the Counſel and the pleaſure of God, for ſo did the ancient Prophets, and the holy Apoſtles: but *Firſt*, becauſe he was the *immediate Interpreter* of the Divine mind and will, as the word which we ſpeak is of ours. For he was in the very *boſom of the Father*; that is, knew his mind not by the inſtructions of an Angel, not by Viſions or Dreams, nor only by the Holy Ghoſt; but by a more intimate diſcovery of Gods counſels and purpoſes to him, as a perſon that was one

with

with him. We cannot underſtand leſs by his being in his Fathers boſom: which is a phraſe that ſignifies He had the neareſt familiarity with Him, and was privy to his moſt ſecret counſels. Which He was able alſo to accompliſh and bring to paſs, and for that reaſon (which is the *ſecond*) may be called the WORD of God. Becauſe he hath ſuch a power in Heaven and Earth, that at his word or command all things are preſently done according to his will. For *Jeſus* being repreſented, you may obſerve, in a viſion to S. *John*, as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, clothed in a purple, *i. e.* a royal robe; is called by the name of
xix. Rev. 13 the *Word of God*; after he had done publiſhing God's mind and will, and was then only executing ſome of his Decrees, by that power which he hath at God's right hand. A power ſo great, that he can by his Word alone (as the Scripture ſpeaks in other caſes of God Almighty, xxxiii. *Pſalm* 6.) without any viſible means to effect it, compaſs his ends, and fulfil what he hath ſpoken either in his threats or promiſes. And *laſtly*, the Article before this Name, ὁ λόγος, *the WORD*, denotes Him to be the perſon to whom this Title ſo particularly and eminently belongs, that it can be given to none elſe. Becauſe

he

he hath moſt perfectly declared God's mind and will to us, and revealed to us all his ſecret purpoſes concerning us in the fulleſt manner that can be; and hath a power far ſurmounting all creatures, to do every thing as he hath declared.

And thus, I ſuppoſe, we are to take the word in this place; for the *WORD made fleſh*, that is, for *Jeſus* himſelf. Who manifeſted his own greatneſs and glory, as you have begun to diſcern already, and bare witneſs concerning himſelf in a very eminent and glorious manner, that he was the *Son of God*. But you muſt not expect that I ſhould here produce all the demonſtrations, which He gave of this Truth, from the time of his being *made fleſh* and coming to dwell among us. No, we are to conſider that the Apoſtle is now ſpeaking of thoſe *Witneſſes* which are *in Heaven*, and thence give their teſtimony: And therefore we muſt not, at preſent, ſeek for any evidences which He produced, while he was on Earth, to juſtifie his high Authority, which is comprehended under the Name of the *Son of God*; but enquire after thoſe only, which He hath given of it, ſince He went to Heaven, and aſcended to the Throne of his

his glory. From whence this *Word of God* hath been pleaſed to ſpeak, or in ſome very remarkable manner to aſſert this Truth, upon no leſs than *three* ſeveral occaſions.

I.

Firſt of all He ſhowed himſelf to his firſt Martyr S. *Steven*, in a ſenſible Majeſty; *ſtanding at the right hand of God*, in the ſplendor of the Divine glory. Read but the vii. *Acts* 55, 56. and there you will find He made himſelf ſo plainly appear to be *the Son of God*, and that *with power* (as S. *Paul* you have heard ſpeaks in i. *Rom.* 4.) that is, the King of Heaven and Earth, next to the moſt ſupreme Majeſty of God the Father Almighty) that nothing can be ſaid againſt it; unleſs any man will be ſo audacious as to fancy that this holy and glorious Martyr was ſtrongly deluded. But there is a clear demonſtration againſt that, from the whole ſtory of his Life and Death. For He was a man of great note and eminency in the Church; who held the very firſt place among the ſeven Deacons (vi. *Acts* 5.) that were choſen to attend the daily miniſtration to the poor. The feeding of whoſe bodies He did not think

think the only thing belonging to his charge; but ſuch was his zeal, he likewiſe broke and diſpenſed the Bread of life to all his neighbours. He juſtified the Chriſtian Faith (of which he was full, vi. *Acts* 5, 8, 10.) againſt all oppoſers; with ſingular wiſdom, great fervour and mighty demonſtrations, by the power of the holy Ghoſt. He confounded all thoſe whom he diſputed withall, though he could not overcome them. He ſtopt their mouths by the *wiſdom and ſpirit* wherewith he ſpake: which made them wiſh they could ſtop his, though there was no other way, they ſaw, to ſilence him, but by taking away his life. They ſuborned therefore falſe witneſſes againſt *him*, whom they knew not how to confute. They brought him before their Great Council to be tried. Where all his Judges fixing their eyes upon him, ſaw he was ſo far from being at all daunted, that there was a ſparkling Majeſty in his countenance, like that of an Angel when he appeared to their forefathers, vi. *Acts* 15. They could never deviſe or fancy any thing greater to ſay of them or of their moſt eminent Doctors, than now they beheld in this illuſtrious perſon. The face of the Patriarch *Iſaac*, they tell us, was ſo changed

ged when the holy Spirit reſted on him, that a Divine light or ſplendor came from his face. And they would have us believe that *Phineas* his countenance did burn and flame like a Torch, by the inhabitation of the holy Ghoſt in him. Nay, *Maimonides* himſelf (to omit the other Authors in which I find theſe reports) will have the Prophets to be Angels. So he interprets more than once, the *firſt* and the *fourth* verſes of the *ſecond* Chapter of the Book of *Judges*. Where by the *Angel of the Lord* he underſtands a Prophet whom God ſent to them, to bring them to repentance. And expreſly ſays * that their wiſe men have told them, *This was Phineas; for at that time when the Majeſty of God dwelt upon him, He was like to an Angel of the Lord.* And it is the opinion of ſome of them, whoſe Names are not worth mentioning, that in the Prophetical viſions, the form of a man vaniſhed, and the appearance of an Angel came in the room thereof, till ſuch time as the Viſion ceaſed. The light which ſhone within was ſo great, that it broke through their bodies, and externally appeared; if we could believe theſe Doctors, who would fain adorn their wiſe men with that glory, which they really beheld in this man of God

* *More Nevoch. part 2. cap. 42.*

God S. *Steven.* Who was ſo full of the holy Ghoſt, and had ſuch glorious illuminations in his mind, that there was indeed an amazing luſtre in his face, and he lookt more like an Angel than a man. This emboldened him to ſpeak to that grave Senate with all the aſſurance in the world; and to reprove them for reſiſting the holy Ghoſt. Which ſo cut them to the heart, that it enraged them to the higheſt degree of fury, and they lookt upon him as if they would eat him up. But he, ſtill full of the holy Ghoſt, and nothing fearing what he ſaw he muſt ſuffer from an exaſperated multitude, caſt up his eyes above, and faſtned them ſtedfaſtly upon the Heavens, from whence cometh our help. Where He bade them all take notice (vii. *Acts* 54, 55, 56.) that he *ſaw the glory of God* and *Jeſus* ſhining at his right hand in a far greater glory than they had ſeen in his face. That was only a glimpſe of the Majeſty of *Jeſus*, whom he preached to them; and now feared not to affirm that he ſaw in his royal ſplendour and greatneſs, incomparably above all the Angels in Heaven.

And is it not a great deal more reaſonable to believe that He indeed ſaw *Jeſus* there, than to think that he would obtrude thus

thus boldly a mere imagination upon them, with the certain loſs of his own life? If he had not been ſure that he beheld him whom they crucified, now moſt highly glorified, a perſon of his wiſdom and ſpirit would have been more cautious than to follow him in that bloudy path, to which this aſſertion led him; when, if he would have held his tongue, there lay a fairer and ſmoother way before him. But ſo viſible was the royal Majeſty of our Saviour, that he could not but proclaim it aloud, and *ſpeak*, as S. *Peter* ſaid, *the things which he had ſeen*: though he knew they would call it blaſphemy, and puniſh him for it with preſent death. He was willing to ſuffer that, for the honour of his Maſter, and to teſtifie his love to him: who told him his Faith was no fancy, as he might ſee by the glory wherein he appeared. Which abundantly ſatisfied him that he was the Son of the Higheſt; able to reward all his faithful ſervants with immortal glory. It is true, we read of never a word that our Lord ſpake to this Saint; but the ſplendour of his appearance in ſuch glory and Majeſty at God's right hand, was as ſignificant as any words could be: and bid him be aſſured of the truth of what S. *John* is here proving, that indeed

indeed he is the Chriſt, the anointed of God; anointed with the oil of gladneſs above all his fellows; made the Lord of all things; inferior to none but only him who hath put all things in ſubjection under his feet.

If any one ask me how he could *ſee the glory of God*, and how he knew this to be *Jeſus*, who appeared at *Gods right hand?* I Anſwer to the firſt enquiry, that He ſaw God's glory in the ſame ſence that others are ſaid to have ſeen God: who beheld ſome very bright appearance, an extraordinary light ſhining before their eyes, which excelled all that ever they had ſeen or could imagine, and was the token of the Divine preſence. Thus *Moſes was afraid to look upon God*, iii. *Exod.* 6. and the Elders of *Iſrael* are ſaid to *ſee the God of Iſrael*, xxiv. 20. which places *Maimonides* thinks are to be underſtood of the Viſion of God, with the eyes of the mind. But the Text is plainly againſt him, which tells us there was a viſible appearance of ſome unuſual, aſtoniſhing brightneſs. And therefore he confeſſes that if any man do conceive thoſe words are to be interpreted of ſome created light (as he ſpeaks *), that is, the viſible apparition of a Divine Ma-

* *More Nevoch. Part.* 1. *cap.* 5. and many other places.

jeſty, or of an Angel, there is no danger in ſuch an apprehenſion. And indeed no man can ſeriouſly read the Books of *Moſes*, but he will ſee plainly they ſpeak of a ſenſible glory, which was exceeding dazling, and ſometimes too great for the weak eyes of men to behold. I have deſcribed it before, when I told you it was nothing elſe but a flaming light, which ſhone from that amazing devouring Fire, which appeared in the cloud to the children of *Iſrael*. Thus *Abarbanel* expounds that place I mentioned before, xvi. *Exod.* 7. *In the morning, then ye ſhall ſee the glory of the Lord.* Which is not to be underſtood of the providing them bread or fleſh in an extraordinary manner; but of the *Fire which appeared to all the people, to reprove and puniſh them for their murmurings.* And ſo *Lyra* ſays, it was *an unuſual refulgent brightneſs or lightning, repreſenting the Divine power ready to chaſtiſe them for their mutiny* againſt his ſervants. And it is very common in the New Teſtament to call ſuch a great ſplendour by the name of glory. As the ſhining of *Moſes* his face is called by S. *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* iii. 7. *the glory of his countenance.* And in the ſame ſtile he ſpeaks of the light of the Heavenly bodies, when he ſays, 1 *Cor.* xv. 41. *There is one*

glory

glory of the Sun, another glory of the Moon, and another glory of the Stars; for one Star differeth from another Star in glory: that is, in the brightneſs and ſplendour of its light.

Such a glory it was that now S. *Steven* beheld, but far more ſplendid, more pure and illuſtrious, than the light of the Sun or any other that has been mentioned; which was a repreſentation of the preſence of the Divine Majeſty, who uſed in this manner to make men ſenſible of his tranſcendent inviſible glory. And there, in the Divine preſence he ſaw our Lord, in the moſt high and honourable place, next to God the Father himſelf. For that's the meaning of his appearing at *the right hand of God,* or of that great *glory* he ſaw in the Heavens: the right hand being the principal place belonging to the Heir of the Crown, when he appears together with the King his Father. And therefore the Divine writer to the *Hebrews* ſays, there never was any Angel ſeen there. They only *ſtand* or miniſter *before God* or before his Throne; *but to which of them did he ſay at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy foot-ſtool?* i. *Hebr.* 13. This is the prerogative of Chriſt

alone, the great King, the Heir of all things; whoſe glory the *Pſalmiſt* deſcribes in that place (cx. *Pſal.* 1.) from whence theſe words are cited; that is, prophecies of his Kingly power in the Heavens, as S. *Paul* clearly expounds this phraſe of *ſitting at Gods right hand*, 1 *Cor.* xv. 25. *For he muſt reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet.* He is a King, and he reigns, and he hath a Throne (i. *Hebr.* 8.) but when he is compared with God the Father Almighty, the fountain of all power and authority, and when he appears together with him; to ſhow that he reigns under him and for him, he is repreſented as ſitting at the *right hand of God*, or the right hand of the *Throne of God.* For ſo his Kingly power is expreſſed in other places, *He is ſet down on the right hand of the Throne of the Majeſty in the Heavens*, *Hebr.* viii. 1. xii. 2. that is, He reigns together with God the Father in the Celeſtial glory. For the *throne of God* ſignifying in the Scripture phraſe (as the forenamed *Maimonides* obſerves) that place where God's Majeſty manifeſts it ſelf in a viſible ſplendour and glory: the ſitting of our Saviour at the right hand of that Throne, or that glory denotes nothing elſe, but his being ſeated in the higheſt

honour

honour that can be given to any one in the Heavenly places: next in greatneſs, power and majeſty to God himſelf, under whom he is the King of Angels, and Men, and all Creatures. There was nothing of which this holy Martyr was more aſſured. To whom this Heavenly King appeared, not in his uſual poſture of *ſitting* at God's right hand, as one poſſeſſed of his royal power; but *ſtanding* there, as if he was miniſtring in the Heavenly Sanctuary, in the quality of a royal high-Prieſt (for that was the poſture of thoſe that miniſtred in the Temple, cxxxiv. *Pſal.* 1.) for the comfort of all Chriſtian people, and of himſelf eſpecially: or rather as ready to come to take vengeance of thoſe implacable enemies, who had killed him and now perſecuted his ſervants; which was a notable inſtance of his royal power at God's right hand. For there the *Pſalmiſt* ſays he muſt reign, till he hath ſubdued all thoſe that oppoſe his authority, and troden them under his feet.

And, as for the *ſecond* enquiry, how he could know this to be *Jeſus*, whom he ſaw in this Heavenly Majeſty? It is eaſily reſolved, that He appeared to him with ſuch a countenance as he had here upon

Earth; only more ſhining and bright, as being now in the glory of the Father. And ſo he tells the *Jews*, I ſee *the Son of Man* ſtanding at the right hand of God. That very perſon, he means, who uſed to call himſelf the *Son of man*, whom you crucified and diſhonourably treated, I now ſee ſo exalted, that I had rather die as he did, than not confeſs him to be the *Son of God*, as he ſaid he was when he died.

This is the firſt teſtimony which was given to this truth by the WORD. Who bore witneſs in a moſt illuſtrious manner to himſelf, when he appeared thus (to a perſon of the greateſt credit) in the *Divine glory*, and in the *higheſt place* of Celeſtial dignity; (as the *King of Heaven*, that is) and *riſen up from his Throne*; as if he was coming to be *avenged* of his adverſaries, to *ſaccour* all his ſervants, and to *welcome* this Martyr into glory with himſelf. So S. *Steven* verily thought, for he reſigns up his Soul to *Jeſus*, with the ſame confidence and almoſt in the ſame words, that *Jeſus* gave up his to God the Father. The laſt words of our Saviour were, *Father, into thy hands I commend my ſpirit*, xxiii. *Luke* 46. And they ſtoned *Steven*, calling upon God, and ſaying,

Lord

Lord Jeſus receive my ſpirit, vii. *Acts* 59. He died with theſe and the following devout words in his mouth, crying again with a loud voice, *Lord, lay not this ſin to their charge.* In which he expreſſed as much *charity* to men, as in the other he did *faith* in Chriſt. And openly declared himſelf a perſon of ſuch piety and goodneſs, ſuch admirable candor and ſweetneſs of ſpirit, ſo utterly void of all rancor and gall, when he had the higheſt provocations from his bitter enemies: that as we may be ſure he could not be guilty of deviſing a lye to the deceiving of others; ſo we may reaſonably believe that God Almighty would not let ſuch an excellent man be deceived, to the ruine of himſelf, and the caſting away ſo precious a life.

II.

But that jealouſie and ſuſpicion might have no pretence left, nor any man juſtly call in queſtion the truth of this apparition; our Saviour was pleaſed a ſecond time both to ſhow himſelf, and alſo to ſpeak very audibly, unto another perſon of great integrity and authority; and that was S. *Paul.* Whoſe teſtimony concerning this, is the more conſiderable, becauſe he

was a perſon of conſiderable note in the Nation of the *Jews*, both for his deſcent and for his education, and for his zeal in their Religion. He was an *Hebrew* both by his Fathers ſide and his Mothers; a Scholar of *Gamaliel*'s, under whom he made an exceeding great proficiency; and was addicted to the moſt ſtrict Sect of Religion then among them; whereby he became full of flaming zeal for the Law, of which he was a rigid obſerver, even according to the expoſitions they had made of it by the traditions of their Elders. Theſe he held ſo ſacred, that the name of *Jeſus* was odious to him, becauſe he little regarded them. And he was tranſported with ſo bloudy a rage againſt his diſciples, that his intention was to ſend as many of them as he could meet withall after S. *Steven, to whoſe death he was conſenting*, viii. *Acts* 1. xxii. 20. that is, He approved the fact of thoſe ſeditious Zealots, who were the authors of it; or, as the words may well be rendred out of the *Syriack* tranſlation, he was as well pleaſed with the killing of him as any of the company. The lenity of his Maſter was no example for him to follow. He learnt no meekneſs in the School of *Gamaliel*, but ſuffered himſelf to be hurried away with the furious

iii. Phil. 5.

i. Gal. 14.

xxvi. Acts 5.

ſpirit

ſpirit of the multitude, whom he accompanied in that tumult. For he undertook to ſecure the garments of thoſe, who ſtript themſelves to throw the firſt ſtone at that bleſſed Martyr of Chriſt *Jeſus*. Nor did his fury reſt here, but he gave his voice againſt other Saints when the ſentence of death paſſed on them, xxvi. *Acts* 10. And not content to make havock of the poor Church at *Jeruſalem*, he enlarged his cruel projects and ſtretches his wrath as far as *Damaſcus*; thither he goes armed with authority from the Senate (xxii. 5.) whoſe Commiſſioner he was now, as he had been for ſome time: which ſhows he was a perſon of no ſmall condition in that Nation. For He tells us himſelf, that what he did at *Jeruſalem* was *by authority from the chief Prieſts*, xxvi. 10. who gave him *letters* alſo to thoſe at *Damaſcus*, that they ſhould aſſiſt him in the apprehending all the Chriſtians that were there, ix. 2. xxii. 5. He brought the Decree of the Senate along with him, which had been made againſt them; and leſt any ſhould queſtion whether he was deputed to ſee that order put in execution, he was ready to ſatisfie them of that by ſhowing his Commiſſion, xxvi. 12. In ſhort, he breathed forth nothing but fire and ſword,

as

as we ſpeak, againſt the worſhippers of the Lord *Jeſus*, being exceeding mad againſt them: according to the account S. *Luke* gives of him, viii. *Acts* 3. ix. 1. and which he gives of himſelf, xxii. 4. xxvi. 11.

Now who would expect that ſuch a man as this ſhould himſelf become a Diſciple of *Jeſus*, much leſs a preacher of his Religion? A man ſo noted for his violence the other way, and whoſe name was ſo terrible to Chriſtian people, that *Ananias* was afraid to go and deliver a meſſage to him from our Lord, after he was told ſomething of his converſion? Was there any hopes that he ſhould ever confeſs and publiſh the very ſame thing for which S. *Steven* was ſtoned? And yet ſo powerful were the prayers of that holy Martyr (which adds much to the force of his teſtimony) that our Lord anſwered them ere long, by pardoning and converting this enraged Zealot. To whom he was graciouſly pleaſed to appear, as he had done to that Saint, more than once, as we find recorded in the Sacred ſtory from his own mouth.

The *firſt* time, and the moſt remarkable

was,

was, when he was upon the rode to *Damascus.* Then our Lord met him, not far from that City (when he had no such thing in his thoughts, but was possessed with quite contrary designs) and made him fall down and worship him, whose Name he so hated, that he would have forced all Christians to blaspheme him. Read the ix. *Acts* 3, &c. and there you will find him, who little regarded what S. *Steven* said, and perhaps took him for a frantick fellow when he told them he saw *Jesus* glorified; surrounded himself with such a glorious light from Heaven, as left him no power to resist this truth, which he had so bitterly persecuted. For in that wonderful brightness, there was a person appeared to him with such a dazling lustre, that after he had beheld it, he lost his eyes, *and could not see by reason of the glory of that light,* xxii. 11. which was the cause I believe that he askt with no small astonishment, *Who art thou Lord?* The Angels appeared sometimes in great glory, but never with such a splendour as to hurt the sight, much less to take it away; and therefore he now concluded that this person was of an higher condition, much greater than the Angelical Ministers, whose brightness was never known to be

so

ſo amazing. And to give ſatisfaction to his doubt, our Lord, the WORD of God, told him in plain terms, with an audible voice, *I am Jeſus whom thou perſecuteſt.* And wiſht him not to proceed any further in this courſe, which he might eaſily ſee would prove deſtructive to him. For to contend with him ſtill who was ſo glorious, what would it be but to wound and ruine himſelf; and by ſeeking to eaſe himſelf of one trouble to run upon a greater; juſt as a beaſt does, that kicks againſt the pricks, which are to quicken it and put it forward? This voice he alone heard, who was to be inſtructed by it. The company that was with him, heard only a confuſed ſound (ix. 7.) and his voice perhaps when he askt that queſtion; but as they ſaw no body, ſo they *did not hear the voice of him that ſpake to him*, xxii. 9. But the light they all ſaw, and were ſo afraid that there they ſtopt their journey, and could not, for the preſent, ſtir a foot from that place. For that's the meaning of *they ſtood ſpeechleſs*, ix. 7. They did not ſtand on their feet, for they all fell to the ground (as you read, xxvi. 14.) but they remained fixt in that ſpot, and could neither ſpeak a word nor go on a ſtep further. As for *Saul* himſelf, he *trembled*

and

and was aſtoniſhed; and began to yield himſelf preſently as a Captive to this Heavenly King, ſaying, *Lord, what wouldeſt thou have me to do?* To this our Lord made him again a diſtinct anſwer (which ſhows this was no ſudden fancy, but that they continued for ſome time in a conference together) and bade him get up, and go into the City, and there he ſhould be directed by him what to do. Accordingly our Lord appeared in a Viſion to *Ananias*, who had the charge, it is likely, of the Church at *Damaſcus*, and ordered him to go in his name, and to lay his hands upon him for the reſtoring of his ſight (ix. 17.) after which he told him, that he muſt now go and tell all men *what he had ſeen and what he had heard* (xxii. 15.) that is, declare to all the world, that *Jeſus* was the King of glory. And which is ſtill more wonderful, *Saul* himſelf as he lay there praying to the Lord for mercy, had the like Viſion (ix. 12.) wherein he ſaw a man of this name coming in to do him this kindneſs. Who no ſooner had executed his commiſſion and put his hands upon him, but immediately the power of our Lord appeared, after he himſelf in perſon was gone. His eyes were preſently opened, though they were ſealed up ſo faſt, as if a cruſt had grown over them. And

And wonderful was the illumination of his underſtanding, together with the reſtoring of his ſight. The light which had put out his eyes, made him clearly ſee, though he was not told ſo in expreſs words, that *Jeſus was the Son of God.* This Heavenly WORD, you may obſerve, doth not in all this ſtory call himſelf by that name. But he declaring himſelf to be *Jeſus*, and *Saul* ſeeing this *Jeſus* in ſo bright a glory that it exceeded the light of the Sun at mid-day (as he confeſſes to *Agrippa*, xxvi. 13.) it did more than tell him that he was, as S. *Steven* had preached, *the Son of God, the King of glory.* For He appeared to him in his glory, and then told him that he whom he beheld thus exceeding glorious, was that very *Jeſus*, whom he was purſuing as a Blaſphemer, for affirming himſelf to be that which he now ſaw him with his own eyes to be.

What could be more convincing than this? eſpecially when he felt himſelf filled with the holy Ghoſt (ix. 17.) merely by the laying on of the hands of one of *Jeſus* his Diſciples? He durſt not diſtruſt, much leſs reſiſt ſo clear and evident a demonſtration. He ſaw there was nothing truer, than

than that *Jeſus* was the *Son of God.* All his learning could not furniſh him with an argument to confute or weaken this ſingle proof which our Saviour gave him of his Divinity. But *ſtraight-way*, upon this teſtimony from the WORD of God himſelf, without requiring any further demonſtration, *He preached Chriſt in the Synagogues, that he is the Son of God*, ix. 20. *Ananias* did not Catechiſe him in this Doctrine, nor ſent him to the Apoſtles to be inſtructed; but He was made an Apoſtle as well as they, *by Jeſus Chriſt* himſelf (i. *Gal.* 1.) who acquainted him immediately with his will, for he *was not taught it, but by the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt* (*ver.* 12.) whom he preached, without asking counſel of any body (*ver.* 16.) as ſoon as God was pleaſed *to reveal his Son in him.* I believe you will eaſily grant that he was as hard as any man living to be perſwaded to receive this revelation, which would force him not only to contradict all that he had formerly maintained, but to condemn himſelf as the vileſt wretch in the world. To become a diſciple to this faith, and to aſſert it likewiſe ſo earneſtly as he did; what was it but to condemn, together with himſelf, all his Maſters, the grave Judges of the Nation, from whom he had

received

received a commiſſion to deſtroy it? It required great courage as well as honeſty to confeſs a Truth, which he knew, by himſelf, would be ſo furiouſly oppoſed. He had been ſuch a fiery perſecutor of all thoſe who believed it, that he had taught his Country-men how to deal with him, if he ſhould now become a proſelyte to it. He was a man alſo of very great parts and learning; and therefore was not like to be moved by a trivial argument. And a perſon likewiſe of as great integrity, who did not bear a malice againſt Chriſtians, but was only zealous for the Law; and therefore would not embrace a new Religion, unleſs he had learnt better reaſons for it, than thoſe which ſupported him in the old. Much leſs would he have ſuffered himſelf haſtily to be carried out of his way, unleſs he had met with ſome irreſiſtible arguments, which were able inſtantly to turn him about, and incline him to the profeſſion of that truth, which he was then perſecuting with an outragious violence.

And yet ſo it was, that this man ſo reſolved in another courſe, ſo certainly undone if he forſook it, of ſuch underſtanding and uprightneſs, was in a trice aſtoniſhed, and

and reduced to ſuch a condition, that he could neither eat nor drink; and in three days ſpace ſo wrought upon, that *ſtraightway*, as you have heard, without any further deliberation or taking more time to ſtudy the point, He not only believed, but undertook to prove, that this perſon whom he had ſo zealouſly oppoſed, was indeed the *Son of God.* Muſt it not be ſome mighty Argument, that could overcome all thoſe reaſons and intereſts too which had engaged him in the contrary belief? Was it not a very clear demonſtration, which could open ſuch a mans eyes in a moment, and break through ſuch ſtrong oppoſition, as lay before his mind to bar its entrance? And yet it was nothing elſe but this teſtimony which the WORD bare to himſelf, that effected this wonderful change. Nothing but *Jeſus* appearing in glory, giving him a terrible rebuke, and ſtriking him blind; which wrought ſuch a ſtrange cure upon him, that as he himſelf ſpeaks (i. *Gal.*23.) He became *a preacher of that faith, which once he deſtroyed.* And therefore this Witneſs cannot but be very powerful to convince every body elſe, which prevailed over a perſon ſo prejudiced and pre-engaged in an oppoſite perſwaſion as *Saul* was.

Who took this Teſtimony, which our Lord had given to himſelf, to be ſo ſtrong and unanſwerable, that preſently after this, when he had further conſidered of the buſineſs and was increaſed in ſtrength, He even *confounded the Jews that were at Damaſcus, proving that this is very Chriſt*, ix. *Acts* 22. So mightily did he convince them, that they had no Anſwer wherewith to encounter his Arguments, but only the Sword: and therefore conſulted (*ver.* 23.) to kill him, and take him out of the way; who as long as he lived they ſaw would be the greateſt witneſs unto *Jeſus*. But all theſe dangers he undervalued, he ran innumerable hazards, made ſtrange adventures, and indured matchleſs troubles; that he might give teſtimony to *Jeſus*, who had ſhown himſelf to him to be the Lord of all. Nay, though he was told at his firſt ſetting out, *how great things he muſt ſuffer for his Names ſake*, ix. 16. he was nothing at all diſmayed, nor in the leaſt diſcouraged: having ſeen the bright Majeſty of *Jeſus* ſo clearly, that flames themſelves could not make him deny it, no nor ceaſe to preach it.

So great was the force of this glorious appearance of our Lord to him, whereby he

he teſtified his own power and greatneſs; that when S. *Paul* was actually fallen into the hands of his bloudy enemies, and made a priſoner, in order to his execution; He had nothing of greater note to alledge for himſelf, by which to juſtifie his preaching *Jeſus* to be the Son of God, than this; that he *had ſeen that Juſt one, and heard the voice of his mouth*; for no other end but this, *That he ſhould be his witneſs unto all men, of what he had ſeen and heard*, xxii. *Acts* 14, 15. And as this was the beſt plea he had when he was to make his defence in that popular tumult, ſo it was the thing that convinced the Apoſtles themſelves that he was become a diſciple. For they doubted of it at firſt, when he came to *Jeruſalem*, and were afraid to aſſociate themſelves with him, till *Barnabas* told them *how he had ſeen the Lord in the way, and that he had ſpoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damaſcus, in the name of Jeſus*, ix. 27. When he came alſo to anſwer for himſelf before *Agrippa*, a Prince of great underſtanding and well verſed in the *Jewiſh* Religion, ſtill he ſtands upon this; that He who thought himſelf bound in conſcience to do many things contrary to the name of *Jeſus of Nazareth*, whoſe ſervants he procured to be

impriſoned, baniſhed, and put to death, was met by this very *Jeſus* in the way to *Damaſcus* (when he was going with Commiſſion to do the ſame there that he had done at *Jeruſalem*) ſaw his exceeding great and incomparable glory; was ſeverely rebuked by him for his rage againſt his diſciples, and then received a Commiſſion from him to act in his name, and to preach againſt the former; all which was ſo evident, that he durſt not be diſobedient to the Heavenly Viſion, but had ever ſince called upon both *Jews* and *Gentiles* to repent and believe in *Jeſus*, though he had been crucified: for it was the Mind of all the Prophets and *Moſes*, that their *Chriſt ſhould ſuffer and then be the firſt that ſhould riſe from the dead, and ſhew light to the people and to the Gentiles.* This is the ſubſtance of his Apology in the xxvi. *Acts*, from which place we may learn *two* things, which are very conſiderable. *Firſt*, that when our Lord appeared to S. *Paul*, he had a great deal of diſcourſe with him, and did not ſay ſo little as only thoſe words, *I am Jeſus whom thou perſecuteſt*, &c. but added thoſe words which follow, *ver.* 16, 17, 18. *Riſe, and ſtand upon thy feet; for I have appeared unto thee for this purpoſe, to make thee a Miniſter and*

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a Witneſs both of theſe things which thou haſt ſeen, and of thoſe in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people and the Gentiles, unto whom now I ſend thee, to open their eyes and to turn them from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveneſs of ſins, and inheritance among them which are ſanctified by faith that is in me. The Divine writers are wont to be very brief in their Relations, and to mention only the principal things which were ſaid and done, leaving out the reſt, which perhaps they ſet down upon ſome other occaſion. And *ſecondly*, in theſe words it is obſervable, that he tells him he muſt be a witneſs not only of the *things which he had ſeen* (now in the way to *Damaſcus*) but of thoſe *in which he intended to appear unto him.* Which clearly intimates that there were other apparitions of the Lord *Jeſus* unto him beſides this. Some of them we find recorded in this Hiſtory of the *Acts*, and other parts of the holy Book.

And a *ſecond* ſight which he had of our Lord was at *Jeruſalem*, as he was praying in the Temple. When he fell into an ecſtaſie or rapture, as he relates himſelf preſently after the mention of the former

(xxii. *Acts* 17.) and *ſaw him*; bidding him make haſte away from that City, where he was not like to do any good, *for they would not receive his teſtimony concerning him.* This was one of the times, as ſome great men have thought, when he was carried up to Heaven, 2 *Cor.* xii. 2.

And again our Lord appeared to him the night after he had been queſtioned by the Council, bidding him be of good chear, for he ſhould bear witneſs of him at *Rome*, as he had done at *Jeruſalem*, xxiii. 11. And to omit that apparition to him in a night Viſion, xviii. 9. and the revelations which it is like were made to him in *Arabia*, preſently after his converſion, He was caught up again into *Paradiſe*, and there had ὀπτασίας Κυρίου, *Viſions*, as well as Revelations, *of the Lord*, 2 *Cor.* xii. 1. When this was it is uncertain. But there are perſons of great note, who imagine, that when the Church of *Antioch* laid hands on him (xiii. *Acts* 3.) not to ordain him an Apoſtle, for ſo he was made by *Jeſus Chriſt* himſelf, but to ſend him out to exerciſe his Apoſtleſhip towards the *Gentiles*, to which he had particularly appointed him; then our Lord vouchſafed to lift him up into Heaven, and to give him

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new Revelations. For there could be no time more fit for it than this, when he was to engage in a dangerous war againſt the whole Idolatrous world. Then he was armed with an extraordinary reſolution, by converſation with Angels in the other world. Where he heard things unutterable, and was confirmed, no doubt, in the belief of the glory of the Lord *Jeſus*, by whoſe power he was thus tranſported; and whom, it is moſt likely, he then again ſaw, ſhining as the Sun among thoſe ſtars of light, in that Orb to which he was carried. But this he ſpeaks of ſo ſparingly himſelf, that I ought to paſs it over as faſt as he does.

The *Firſt* is the chiefeſt and greateſt evidence of all: which he moſt depended on, and whereby he juſtified himſelf againſt all accuſers. This was his warrant; to this he appeals upon all occaſions, that *He ſaw Jeſus in the way to Damaſcus.* And he had great reaſon to ſtick to it; for he knew that no body could ſhame him, by ſo much as pretending that he lied, and that there was no ſuch thing as this apparition of *Jeſus* to him. He had his companions in his journey to be witneſſes of the Miraculous glory, which on a ſudden

ſurpriſed them, as well as him, (xxvi. *Acts* 15.) They heard then the voice of ſome body diſcourſing with him, though they did not diſtinctly hear the words. It became preſently notorious every where; *for this thing*, as he tells *Agrippa*, *ver.* 26. *was not done in a corner*, but openly, and at noon-day, to the aſtoniſhment of divers perſons who attended him. And it left a ſenſible effect upon his body, and upon his mind. He could neither ſee, nor eat, nor drink for three days. In which ſpace he ſaw a viſion of a man named *Ananias* coming to him and bidding him receive his ſight. All which proved true; and together with his ſight he received a new ſpirit, whereby he confounded the *Jews* at *Damaſcus*. For they could not deny all this, and yet were loth to believe in *Jeſus*. They were amazed to hear him preached by a man, who they knew was come thither with a quite contrary intent, ix. 21. They could not but ask, what is the matter? whence comes this marvellous change? *Is not this he that deſtroyed them which called on this Name in Jeruſalem? And is not that the buſineſs for which he came hither, to bring them bound unto the chief Prieſts?* What ailes him now, that he thus juſtifies them and condemns himſelf?

ſelf? And there is no doubt, but to anſwer ſuch Queſtions he took the opportunity to tell them, *what he had ſeen and what he had heard*; for ſo *Ananias* charged him, xxii. 15. He did not keep this as a ſecret; it was not carried in privacy, but preſently divulged, that all might inquire, if they pleaſed, into the circumſtances of the fact. Which was ſo ſtrange, that as it amazed and confounded them at *Damaſcus*; ſo King *Agrippa* knew not what to ſay to it, but was *almoſt perſwaded to be a Chriſtian*, xxvi. *Acts* 28.

No man of ſence could think that a perſon of his education and learning would venture the loſs of his eaſe, of his reputation, of all the preferment he had, and of all that he might juſtly hope for from the *Sanhedrim*, without the leaſt expectation of any gain, unleſs of that only which *Jeſus* could give him; if he had not been fully aſſured it was no deluſion, when he preſented himſelf to him as the Lord of glory. Much leſs could any man imagine, that a perſon of his vertue and unblameable life under the Law, and of ſuch ſtrange piety and perfect contempt of all worldly things after his receiving Chriſtianity, would feign and deviſe ſuch a ſtory; by which if

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it were falſe he could get nothing in the other world, and if it were true he could get nothing in this. Nothing but miſery, trouble, infamy and reproach, which attended him every where, and never left him till it had brought him to a ſhameful death. If you will but conſider what he quitted for Chriſt's ſake, after he had thus appeared to him, and how the world treated him when he became a preacher of this Goſpel (as you find it deſcribed by himſelf in ſeveral Epiſtles, particularly iii. *Philip.* 8. 1 *Cor.* iv. 9, 10, 11, *&c.* 2 *Cor.* vi. 4, 5, *&c.* xi. 23, 24, *&c.*) you will ſoon be ſatisfied that he was more in his wits, than either to invent this ſtory, or publiſh it without ſtrong aſſurance of its truth. He was as ſure that he *ſaw the Lord Jeſus in his glory*, and *heard the voice of his mouth*, as every body elſe that knew him was ſure, he had been a blaſphemer of him and a perſecutor of his ſervants. And therefore whatſoever it coſt him, he would be obedient to that Heavenly Viſion. And *having a Miniſtry* from him (as he ſpeaks in the 2 *Cor.* iv. 1, 2, 3.) *according as he had received mercy* (ſo he accounted it, a very great favour to become one of his Miniſters) *he did not faint*, nor diſcharge his office ſluggiſhly. Nor did he think of making

making up his losses by this new profession of preaching the Gospel, but abhorred such a dishonest thought, and utterly *renounced all such base and shameful arts*, though never so *secretly* managed, and covered over with never such specious pretences. He did not *walk in craftiness*, nor appear other than he really was. Much less would he to please any men, *handle the word of God deceitfully*; either by concealing any thing that was true, or by mixing any false stories of his own inventing. No, by *plain truth he commended himself to every mans conscience, as in the presence of that God*, who is the avenger of all fraud and imposture. And therefore he justly concludes, that if any man did not receive these things, nor think them evident enough, it was because he deserved to perish, for the love he bore to some naughty affection or other, which would not let him submit to *Jesus*. For it was *him* the Apostles preached (*ver.* 5.) not *themselves*; they did not do their own business, but his only, whom they proclaimed to be the *Lord*, and themselves no more but his *servants*; nay, the servants of all Christian people for his sake.

But I must no longer follow the story of this

this great man, who became *ſo ſtrong in the Lord and in the power of his might*, after He had from Heaven appeared and ſpoken to him; that as nothing could daunt him, ſo nothing could hinder the ſucceſs of his labours. He became the moſt eminent ſervant of the Lord *Jeſus*, and prevailed ſo mightily againſt all the oppoſition which the Devil or men raiſed to fruſtrate his endeavours, that he gives thanks to God, in the *ſecond* Chapter of that Epiſtle, *ver.* 14. *Who always cauſed him to triumph in Chriſt, and made manifeſt the odour of his knowledge by him in every place.* All his travels and long journeys proved in the iſſue, as if they had been but the carrying of him about in a triumphal Chariot, to make him a glorious ſpectacle in all thoſe places (as the *Syriack* tranſlates it) where, in ſpite of all that the moſt powerful cruelty and rage could do, he was ſtill victorious; and brought divers Souls into a chearful ſubjection to his Maſter Chriſt *Jeſus*.

III.

Who was pleaſed laſt of all, but more frequently than to any other, to ſhow himſelf, after he went to Heaven, to this very

ry Apoſtle, whoſe words I am expounding, his beloved Diſciple S. *John*. By whom he comforts and encourages all other Chriſtians to continue ſtedfaſt in their Religion, and to take their ſhare with him, *in tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jeſus Chriſt*. Who many ways declared to him that he was the *Son of God*, the King of glory, able to reward his patient ſervants: and moreover ſent Letters by him to ſeveral Churches of the Saints; teſtifying the very ſame things, which He made him ſee and hear, in ſeveral viſions. They are recorded in that Book which tells us in the very firſt words of it, that it is the *Revelation of Jeſus Chriſt*, which he ſent and ſignified by the Miniſtery of his Angel to his ſervant *John*. Who *had* already *born record* (ſo the word ἐμαρτύρησε is to be rendred *ver.* 2.) *of the WORD of God, and of the teſtimony of Jeſus, and of all things that he ſaw*; Had declared, that is, in his Goſpel *Jeſus* to be the WORD of God; and made known that which he teſtified to be Gods will concerning men; together with all the evidences, by Miracles and other ways, which he had ſeen of the truth of that, which *Jeſus* teſtified. There could not be a fitter perſon than he, who perhaps alſo

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was the only Apoſtle now remaining in the world, to hold communication with this WORD of God, and receive new revelations from *Jeſus*. He being at this time likewiſe baniſhed and confined to *the Iſle which is called Patmos, ver.* 9. for the cauſe now named, that is, *for the Word of God, and for the teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt.*

In this loneſome place, ſeparated from the reſt of the Earth, our Lord opened Heaven to him, and ſhewed him the glory which he had there. For he fell into a rapture on the *Lords day* (*ver.* 10.) and heard one ſpeak behind him with a voice as loud as a trumpet, ſaying, *I am before and after all things*, that is, God bleſſed for ever; *Write what thou ſeeſt in a Book, and ſend it to the ſeven Churches which are in Aſia*, whoſe names are there expreſſed, *ver.* 11. Whereupon he turn'd about to ſee whence this voice came, and then he beheld in the midſt of *ſeven golden Candleſticks*, repreſenting thoſe Churches, a very glorious perſon, appearing in the moſt royal majeſty and power. He did not ask him, as S. *Paul* did, who he was; for he had been long acquainted heretofore with that countenance, and knew him perfectly well to be our bleſſed Saviour. Who, by his

his very habit wherein he appeared, declared himself to be, as he had said, the Lord of all; who had no superiour, nor any second, in that Kingdom which God the Father had given him, but disposed all things according to the sole pleasure of his will. For he beheld him, *clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle*, &c. *ver.* 13, 14, 15, 16. He saw, that is, as *Irenæus* truly expresses it, *Sacerdotalem & glorioſum regni ejus adventum*, him appear in his Priestly and glorious Kingdom. For a long Robe and a golden Girdle, belonged both to Kings, and to the High-Priest in the *Jewish* Nation. And all the rest of the description, it were easie to show, is a plain representation of a person shining in the glory of God the Father; and invested with such an irresistible power in the Heavens, as might justy make all his Friends rejoyce, who acknowledged him to be the *Son of God* most high, and all his Enemies quake and tremble, who opposed his sovereign Authority. In short, so glorious was the sight, that S. *John* himself was not able to bear it, but when he saw him, fell at his feet as dead, *ver.* 17. till the WORD (as *Irenæus* speaks in the same place) on whose breast he had reposed himself

L. 4. cap. 37.

himſelf at his laſt Supper, revived and comforted him with theſe gracious words; *Fear not, I am the firſt and the laſt: I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore,* Amen; *and have the keys of Hell and of Death.* As much as to "ſay, Thou waſt not deceived when thou "thoughteſt thou ſaw *the Son of man* ap- "pear to thee. It is I indeed, therefore be "not ſo afraid, though now thou behold- "eſt me in ſuch Heavenly Majeſty and Di- "vine glory; for thou oughteſt rather to "rejoyce to think that I am the eternal "God. I whom thou kneweſt when I li- "ved upon Earth, and whom thou ſaweſt "ſhamefully put to death, am now alive, "as thou ſeeſt alſo, never to die any more; "and am intruſted with a power to reſcue "you from death, and raiſe you out of "your graves.

It would be too long, if I ſhould tell you all that he ſays in his Letters to thoſe Churches, to aſſert his title to the Name of the [*Son of God*] which he expreſly takes to himſelf in one of them (ii. *Rev.* 18.) and to declare his royal power which he exerciſes in all the world, eſpecially in his Church, the houſe of the living God; where he hath ſuch an abſolute authority

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(expreſſed by having *the keys of the houſe of David*, &c. iii. 7.) that none can contradict him, either by preſerving any man in the Divine favour, if he reject him; or by excluding any man from it, if he receive him. It may ſuffice to obſerve theſe two things. *Firſt*, that there is not one of thoſe Letters but it begins with ſome ſuch deſcription of our Saviour's ſovereign Majeſty, as this now mentioned. For the character he had given of himſelf in the firſt Chapter, is again repeated, by parts, in the following meſſages to the Churches. Where he ſometimes calls himſelf, *He that walks in the midſt of the ſeven golden candleſticks*, ii. 1. that is, inſpects and governs them. Sometime the *firſt and the laſt, which was dead and is alive*, *ver.* 8. that is, the Lord God, who can raiſe him from the dead, who parts with his life for me. And, to name no more, he calls himſelf, *ver.* 12. *He that hath the ſharp ſword with two edges*, to cut in pieces either them or their enemies, according as they deſerved of him. And indeed it being the office of a King (which is the *ſecond* thing to be obſerved) or a ſupreme Governour, to puniſh offenders, and to reward vertuous perſons; he conſtantly aſſumes both theſe powers to himſelf, in every one of theſe

ſeven Letters: telling them what evil ſhould befall them from his hand, if they did not amend; and what bleſſings he would beſtow upon them, if they did overcome. Which is a plain declaration of his Regal power and authority, which he now hath at the right hand of the Throne of God.

There S. *John* ſaw him in a ſecond Viſion, as *Irenæus* calls it, v. *Rev.* 6. where he appears in ſuch power with God, that none hath the like. For there was a majeſty repreſented to the Apoſtle, ſitting on a Throne, with a Book in *his right hand* (*ver.* 1.) which none could open, or read, or ſo much as look into. And then behold, this Lamb of God, who had been ſlain, comes and appears in *the midſt of the Throne*; being the *Lyon* of the Tribe of *Judah*, as one of the Elders calls him, *ver.* 5. that royal perſon whom God promiſed to ſend to rule over them. He takes the Book out of the right hand of him that ſate on the Throne, *ver.* 7. which ſignifies that he is next to God the Father of all, at whoſe right hand he ſtood, in power and glory. As appears alſo by his being ſeated in his Throne (for the thrones of the Eaſtern Kings, to which theſe expreſſions allude,

allude, were wide, like one of our Couches, in which more than one may ſit) and by his having the principal Angels, the *ſeven ſpirits of God* at his command, to imploy where he pleaſed. Who, together with the reſt of the Heavenly hoſt and with the Chriſtian Church, make their acclamations to him (*ver.* 11, 12.) as worthy of the moſt ſupreme power and dignity, which they expreſs in as many Names of praiſe, as there are principal Spirits of God; when they ſay, *Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain to receive* 1. *power*, *and* 2. *riches*, *and* 3. *wiſdom*, *and* 4. *ſtrength*, *and* 5. *honour*, *and* 6. *glory*, *and* 7. *bleſſing*. And then immediately he hears every Creature joyning him in their Doxology, together with God the Father, ſaying, *ver.* 13. *Bleſſing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that ſitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.*

I

But the more fully to repreſent his Divine power, you may obſerve that he appears in another Viſion to him, in the very ſame ſtate and majeſty, wherein God was wont to make himſelf preſent, in the times of old. Then you read that the Lord *made the clouds his chariot, and walkt upon*

the wings of the wind, ciii. *Pſalm* 3. that is, came to them by the miniſtery of Angels, who appeared in bright and ſhining clouds, to do his will with great expedition every where. For ſo it is expounded in the xviii. *Pſalm* 10. where inſtead of *clouds* it is ſaid, *He rode upon a Cherub and did flie, yea, he did flie upon the wings of the wind.* That is, there was a token of his preſence by the majeſtick appearance of Angels, who were ready to be imployed by him, and immediately to execute his commands. For *to ride* upon any thing, as *Maimonides* obſerves *, is, in the Holy Language, to rule, to govern, to have an abſolute power over it, and diſpoſe of it as one pleaſes. And therefore *to ride upon a Cherub*, or to *make the clouds his chariot* (which are the very ſame, becauſe the Angels appeared in glorious clouds) is to ſend thoſe Heavenly Miniſters whither he thinks good, to perform his pleaſure. Whence it is, I ſuppoſe, that the *Pſalmiſt* ſays elſewhere (lxviii. 34.) *his ſtrength is in the clouds*, becauſe he is powerfully preſent by them in all places. For as *Andreas Cæſarienſis* hath truly obſerved, in his Commentaries upon the Revelation, a cloud, in the Sacred writings, is ever *a Miniſter about Divine buſineſſes, and perpetually*

* *More Nevoch. Part.* 1. *cap.* 70.

Ἀεὶ τῆς θείων πραγμάτων ὑπουργὸς, &c.

petually imployed in them; becauſe they are above us, and are very ſwift, as the Angels are in their motions, and are both dark and bright; a fit emblem of the glory of the Divine Majeſty which is inſcrutable by us.

Now juſt in ſuch a glorious Majeſty and mighty power did S. *John* behold our bleſſed Saviour, making the clouds, that is, the Angels his chariot, in which he ſate as a Lord, to whom they were to do ſervice. So he tells us in xiv. *Rev.* 14. *And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one ſate, like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden Crown, and in his hand a ſharp ſickle.* Where by *cloud*, the foremention'd writer underſtands, ἀγγελικήν τινα δύναμιν, ſome Angelical power (of which this *white*, that is, bright *cloud*, was a repreſentation) miniſtring to our Saviour. For S. *John* ſaw him upon this cloud; and *ſitting* there, as if it were the Throne or Royal Chariot of this Prince. Who ſate there with a *Crown on his head*, denoting his Royal authority; and that *of Gold*, to ſhow, by what is moſt precious among us, τὸ ἔνδοξον, the ſplendour and greatneſs of his Majeſty; and with a *ſickle in his hand*, to ſignifie that he hath

ſuch a power, as to be able to cut down Kingdoms and States, with as much eaſe as we mow a field of corn. All theſe *three* laſt expreſſions ſet forth the higheſt dignity and moſt royal power; and therefore ſo doth his *ſitting upon a cloud*, or being carried by Angels, as Kings were anciently and ſtill are in the Eaſtern Countries by their ſervants. Which kind of ſpeech, and other ſuch like phraſes in the holy Language (as *riding upon the wings* of Angels, denoted by the *clouds* and *wind*) ſignifie the exerciſe of his Kingly power by their Miniſtry. Who are ready to fly any whither, to convey his orders, and execute them throughout the world. Where he being preſent by them, as a King is by his ſeveral Miniſters in every part of his Dominions, he is ſaid to *ſit upon them*, as if, whither-ſoever they go, they carried him. Thus the ancient Books ſpeak of God the Creator and Governour of all; and thus our Saviour teaches S. *John* to ſpeak of him: which is a ſign that he is the Son of God, *who ſends forth the Angels to miniſter for them eſpecially, who ſhall be heirs of ſalvation.*

And therefore in another Viſion, which is all I need mention, xix. *Rev.* 11, 12, *&c.*

He

He ſaw him again coming out of Heaven, with the Royal enſigns of his victorious power over thoſe who had oppoſed his authority. For, *behold a white horſe*, which was proper for a conqueror, and one ſitting upon him, whoſe name was called the *WORD of God.* Who was *clothed*, he tells us, *with a veſture dipt in bloud*; that is, with a purple garment, ſuch as Kings uſe to wear; and *his eyes* ſparkled, or rather *flamed like fire*, to denote how terrible he was to his Enemies; and *there were on his head many Crowns*, becauſe he had already conquered ſeveral Kingdoms and Provinces, and was now going to ſubdue more: being attended with *all the armies in Heaven*, who waited upon him to miniſter to him in this war, till, as he was of right, he was actually acknowledged, by humble ſubjection to him, to be KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

And what greater argument can there be of the power of our Lord, and of the truth of theſe Viſions (whereby the WORD of God, who hath the lineaments of future things in his mind, as *Ireneus ſpeaks*, repreſented how God would

hereafter diſpoſe of the affairs of the world) than his poſſeſſing himſelf of a Kingdom, and perſwading ſo great a part of mankind to ſubmit to him, though a King inviſible, merely by the preaching of ſuch men as S. *John?* The event hath proved, it was no deluſion when he heard thoſe *great voices* in Heaven ſaying, xi. 15. *The Kingdoms of this world are become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Chriſt, and he ſhall reign for ever and ever.* Which was accompliſhed alſo with very great ſpeed, as he ſaw repreſented by an Angel which appeared *flying* in the midſt of Heaven, xiv. 6. *Having the everlaſting Goſpel to preach unto them that dwell on the Earth.* That motion of *flying* ſeems to ſignifie the haſte which the great Miniſters of Chriſt made (who are compared in this book to Angels) to publiſh his Goſpel to the world. Which had mighty ſucceſs, becauſe it came with authority from Heaven, as is repreſented by the Angels flying ἐν μεσουρανήματι, *in the midſt* of the air, between Heaven and Earth, to denote ſomething he had in hand, which was decreed above, and to be done here below. The greateſt powers on Earth indeed ſet themſelves againſt it, and *made war with the Lamb*, xvii. 14. that is, perſecuted Chriſtianity;

ſtianity: But he foretells his conqueſts, even over theſe Kingdoms who were ſuch furious enemies, as to ſeek to deſtroy his Religion. For which he gives only theſe two reaſons; becauſe God had made him *Lord of Lords, and King of Kings*; and becauſe thoſe who followed him were ſuch *choice perſons*, that their patient conſtant perſeverance in his ſervice, to which he had called them, helpt to overcome his and their Enemies, and to bring them in ſubjection to him.

I can think of nothing that can be objected againſt what hath been ſaid, but two things, which deſerve briefly to be conſidered. One of them concerns this laſt particular now handled, and the other ſeems to croſs all that hath been delivered in this Chapter. Againſt what hath now been alledged from the Revelations, it may be objected, that this Book of Viſions was doubted of among ſome of the ancient Chriſtians. To which the Anſwer is very obvious, That there was a particular reaſon why this Book did not always go along with the reſt into every bodies hands, and by that means, being not ſo generally known, was afterward queſtioned; becauſe the making of it as publick

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as the Chriſtian doctrine, might have too much incenſed the power of the *Roman* Empire, whoſe downfall is here ſo plainly predicted. Yet it was not kept ſo private, but that it is cited very early, both as a Divine Book, and as the writing of S. *John* the Apoſtle, by thoſe who deſerve to be believed. *Juſtin Martyr* had that opinion of it, and ſo had *Irenæus*, as I have already ſaid, and *Theophilus Antiochenus*, and *Origen*; eſpecially S. *Cyprian*, who, I have obſerved, produces teſtimonies out of no book of the New Teſtament ſo oft as this. From whence he encourages Chriſtians to follow their Maſter and all that worthy company who had hazarded their lives for him. *It being the peculiar glory*, ſaith he*, *of our time, that whereas ancient examples might be numbred, now there is ſuch an exuberant abundance of vertue and faith, that Chriſtian Martyrs cannot. So the Revelation witneſſes, I beheld, and lo a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindred, and people, and tongues ſtood before the Throne, and before the Lamb with white robes and palms in their hands*, vii. 9. *And theſe*, he was told, *are they which came out of great tribulation, and have waſhed their robes, and made them white in the bloud of the Lamb.*

* *De Exhort. Martyr.*

Lamb. I ſhall not produce the words of any of the reſt, nor of divers others, who without any manner of doubting pronounce this to be the *Revelation of the* WORD *of God to his ſervant John.*

But paſs to the other thing, which may be alledged to the prejudice of the whole foregoing diſcourſe. For I produce nothing, ſome may ſay, but the teſtimony which one gives of himſelf, which all confeſs to be of no validity. This WORD of God himſelf ſaith ſo, as this very Apoſtle hath recorded, v. *John* 31. *If I bear witneſs of my ſelf, my witneſs is not true.* And yet what is all that S. *Steven* ſaw, or that he ſpake to S. *Paul* and S. *John*, but his witneſs of himſelf?

I anſwer in his own words alſo, which you read in another place of that Goſpel, viii. 14. where the *Phariſees* objecting to him his own conceſſion (*ver.* 13.) that a mans teſtimony to himſelf is nothing worth; he ſeems to revoke, but in truth only explains it, by telling them in terms quite contrary, *though I bear record of my ſelf, my record is true.* The former words are not ſo to be underſtood, as if what a man ſays of himſelf were always falſe, or not to be

be regarded when he hath a concurrent teſtimony from others; no, it may be *true*, though it will perſwade no body elſe to believe it without other evidence. That's all our Saviour means in the *Fifth* Chapter, if he had alone born witneſs to himſelf, and there had been no other teſtimony given him, it had not been *true*, that is, not a valid, unexceptionable teſtimony, by which he might demand credit from them. So the word *true* is uſed, viii. *John* 17. in the ſence of the Law, which required two or three witneſſes for the eſtabliſhing or ſetling any thing in queſtion. They had no reaſon to believe he was Gods Son, but might ſtill have diſputed it, if he had been the only perſon that ſaid ſo, and could have brought no other to witneſs for him. And yet notwithſtanding He tells them here, that even in this caſe his teſtimony of himſelf is *true*, as truth is oppoſed to falſhood; though it wanted that truth which was neceſſary to make it a legal teſtimony. That is, though it could not have paſſed in Law, nor ſtopt the mouth of gainſayers, becauſe it was a ſingle teſtimony, and the Law required more than one; yet it would have had nothing of a lie in it, but his words would have been perfectly *true*,

when

when he affirmed himſelf to be the *Son of God.*

But this was not his caſe, He alone did not bear witneſs to himſelf, but there were others beſide him, who bare witneſs of him, and ſaid the ſame thing that he did (as he ſhows, v. *John* 32, 33, 36, *&c.*) and ſaid it, before he aſſumed this name to himſelf. And therefore his teſtimony, which ſingle would have had no ſtrength, being joyned to the other is of great force, and ought to be regarded. He did not deſire to be received merely becauſe he ſaid he was the Son of God (though he ought not to be accounted a liar for ſaying ſo alone) no, he referred them to other proof of that truth. But when they had heard and conſidered them, then there was reaſon they ſhould hear what he affirmed concerning himſelf: and not think the worſe of him, becauſe he ſpake thoſe words, which were no other than the very words of the Father, whereby he bare witneſs to him. So he tells them in the viii. *John* 17, 18. *It is written in your Law, that the teſtimony of two men is true. I am one that bear witneſs of my ſelf, and the Father that ſent me beareth witneſs of me.* That is, you have no reaſon to diſparage my teſtimony

of

of my ſelf, becauſe I do but repeat the very ſame thing which the Father hath ſaid before me. For though alone (as I have confeſſed heretofore) my teſtimony of my ſelf is worth nothing, and cannot challenge belief; yet added unto ſo high a teſtimony as his, it ought to be duly regarded and accepted.

But beſides this, I muſt add another conſideration of great moment. Which is, that the Teſtimony of the WORD concerning himſelf now that he is *in the Heavens* is of great validity, even ſingly conſidered; though it had no ſuch authority alone, when he was *upon the Earth*. For during his ſtay here *on Earth*, it could not appear by his bare ſaying ſo, that he was the *Son of God, the King of Iſrael*; becauſe he was in a poor, mean and low condition, altogether unlike a King: And therefore if the *Father* and the *Spirit* had not teſtified ſo much, none could have believed on him. But when he was *in the Heavens*, then what he ſaid of himſelf carried great authority and power with it; becauſe he could not ſay thoſe words to any one, but he muſt appear as a King in glory. There were things as well as words to ſpeak for him. At the ſame time

time that he bare witneſs of himſelf, they to whom he ſpake muſt needs ſee the truth of his Teſtimony, by the royal ſtate and majeſty wherein they beheld him.

If the queſtion ſhould be, whether a perſon be alive; his own appearing in Court would be the beſt teſtimony that could be given of it. If whether ſuch a one be a King, his ſitting upon his Throne with his Crown on his head, in his royal Palace, and his Miniſters round about him, would be the ſureſt evidence that could be deſired to put it out of doubt. In this caſe therefore where the queſtion is, whether *Jeſus* be the Son of God or no; there cannot be expected a better reſolution of it, than his own witneſs to himſelf, by appearing upon the Throne of his Glory. There ſeveral perſons of unblemiſhed credit beheld him, and had the confidence to venture their lives upon the certain knowledge they had that they were not deceived. From thence he ſpake to them, and directed them to ſpeak and carry his meſſages to others, that they might believe on the Name of the Son of God. And let it but be remembred (which I noted at the beginning) that we are now examining thoſe witneſſes which ſpeak from

from *Heaven*, and not thoſe which ſpeak on the *Earth*; and then you will ſoon diſcern that theſe teſtimonies of the WORD, though concerning himſelf, ought to be received with great reverence, and to be judged very full and powerful to prove *Jeſus* to be the Son of God. Eſpecially, ſince beſides his own word for it, we have alſo the word of the Father, who ſeveral times called him his Son, and that before he took this honour to himſelf.

A PRAYER.

LET all mankind therefore honour thee, O bleſſed Jeſus, *even as they honour the Father! Be thou adored every where upon Earth, with the ſame reverence and love, wherewith all the Angels in Heaven worſhip thee! whom they and we acknowledge to be the* LORD; *the* WORD of God; *the* Wiſdom of the Father; *the* bright morning Star; *the* Light of the World; *the* Prince of Life; *the* Heir of all things; *the* KING OF KINGS, AND THE LORD OF LORDS; God bleſſed for ever.

Thou

Thou art the King of glory, O Chriſt. Thou art the everlaſting Son of the Father. The Beginner and the Finiſher of our Faith; the Judge of the World; the Author of Eternal Salvation unto all them that obey thee. O how happy are they that know thee, and ſtedfaſtly believe in thee, and ſincerely love thee, and heartily obey thee, and have a good hope that thou wilt bleſs them, and imploy thy power for their promotion to that glory wherein thou reigneſt! I rejoyce to hear thee ſay, that thou who waſt dead art alive for evermore, *Amen*: and haſt the keys of Hell and of Death. *I thank thee for appearing ſo often, to aſſure our Souls, that thou ſitteſt at the right hand of God, and haſt all power in Heaven and in Earth. Great is the conſolation which thou haſt given us, by the ſight of that Glory, wherein thy firſt Martyr beheld thee, ready to ſuccour all thy faithful ſervants. Marvellous was thy work, O Lord, for which all thy Church will for ever praiſe thee, in calling* S. Paul to be an Apoſtle, ſeparated unto the Goſpel of God. *Adored be thy glorious Majeſty, which appeared to him for this purpoſe, to make him a* Miniſter and a Witneſs of what he ſaw and heard, that he might go and open the eyes of the Gentiles, to turn them from

darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; that they might receive forgiveneſs of ſins, and inheritance among them which are ſanctified by faith that is in thee. *O how full of comfort is that Revelation which thou haſt made of thy ſelf to thy ſervant* John! *Who received the brighteſt diſcoveries of thy glory in Heaven, when he was in the moſt deſolate condition upon Earth! who beheld thy care over thy Church, and thy conqueſts over thine enemies: thy Prieſtly and thy Royal power, to the perpetual joy of thoſe that love thee, and the terror of all thoſe that oppoſe thee.*

O *bleſſed* Jeſus, *far be it from any of us in the leaſt to contradict thy will: who art ſo highly advanced far above all principality and power, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but alſo in that which is to come. May every Chriſtian Soul be ſo ſenſibly affected with the belief of thy Glory, as to proſtrate it ſelf before thee, and ſay with the ſame ſpirit that thy bleſſed Apoſtle* S. Paul *did when thou appeareds̄t unto him,* Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? *May that ardent love burn in every one of our breaſts, towards thee and towards one another, which was in thy beloved Diſciple, who bare record of thee, and teſtified to us theſe things! And*

may

may none of us prove ſo falſe and unkind, as to leave our firſt *love; but our* work, and charity, and ſervice, and faith, and patience *may be ever commended by thee,* and the laſt be more than the firſt!

Then ſhall we be able with a chearful countenance to look up unto thee, and to think of thy majeſty and glory with exultation and triumph, and not with terror and amazement of ſpirit. We will joy in thy ſtrength, O Lord, and in thy ſalvation how greatly ſhall we rejoyce! *We will rejoyce even in the midſt of tribulation; and though we walk through the valley of the ſhadow of death, we will fear no evil: but ſtedfaſtly looking up unto Heaven, call upon thee,* O *Lord* Jeſus, *and beſeech* thee to receive our Spirit. *Into thy hands be they recommended both now and ever, with moſt earneſt deſires and hope, that thou wilt* help thy ſervants, whom thou haſt redeemed with thy precious bloud, and make them to be numbred with thy Saints in glory everlaſting. *Amen.*

CHAP. IV.

Concerning the Teſtimony of the HOLY GHOST.

WE have heard the WORD ſpeak enough in his own behalf; and I do not think it needful to hear that *Witneſs* any further. Let us attend now to the Teſtimony of the third perſon in the holy Trinity, and hear what the HOLY GHOST ſaith; who we ſhall find, upon due examination, agrees perfectly in the ſame thing, and declares that *Jeſus is the Son of God.* Witneſs that glorious appearance of the Divine Spirit upon him when he was baptized, and the great gifts and endowments thereof, wherewith ever after that he was filled himſelf and filled others. For here we may note *three* things, as we did in the opening of the teſtimony of the other two *Witneſſes.*

I.

The *firſt* is that when the Spirit of God *deſcended* upon him, immediately after his Baptiſm, and in an illuſtrious manner *remained* on him (as S. *John* Baptiſt teſtifies it did, i. *John* 32, 33.) then the Holy Ghoſt bare witneſs of him, that he was the *Son of God*. In our reflections upon which, we are to conſider diſtinctly firſt how it *deſcended*, and then that it *remained* and abode upon him.

And for the better underſtanding of both theſe we muſt know, that when the *Jews* would expreſs any viſible appearance of the Majeſty and glory of God, they call it the SCHEKINAH, that is, the *Habitation* or *dwelling*; becauſe God ſhowed himſelf thereby to be extraordinarily preſent, and that he did, as it were, *dwell* in that place, to afford thoſe, to whom he ſo manifeſted himſelf, his gracious help, comfort, or inſtruction. This is the name they give even to that Preſence of God which was in the moſt holy place [the Glory of the Lord which appeared upon the Cherubims] becauſe He dwelt there, and took up his reſt among

among them, by this token of his preſence with them. So He himſelf had ſpoken, xxv. *Exod.* 8. *Let them make me a Sanctuary, that I may* DWELL *among them.* That is, *the Glory of the Lord, which* ABODE *upon mount Sinai* (xxiv. 16.) came and took up its reſidence there in the Sanctuary. From theſe two places, they gave it the name of *dwelling* or *abode*. "And tell us, that from the day that this "*Schekinah*, as they ſpeak, or Divine "preſence dwelling among them, reſted "on mount *Sinai* at the giving of the Law; "it never departed from *Iſrael*, till the "deſtruction of the houſe of the firſt San-"ctuary by the King of *Babylon*: after that "the Divinity or this glorious token of the "Divine preſence did not dwell among "them. They are the words of *R. Bechai* upon *Gen.* xlv.

But that which had been ſo long abſent, returned now in a far more glorious manner than ever: not to dwell in an houſe of ſtone; but in *the Temple of our Saviours body*, as he calls, ii. *John* 21. For when *Jeſus* was baptized, *Lo, the Heavens were opened unto him, and he ſaw the Spirit of God deſcending like a Dove, and lighting upon him*, iii. *Matth.* 16. Every word of

this verſe is very obſervable. For the *opening of the Heavens* in the prophetical writings (as *Grotius* hath obſerved upon xix. *Revel.* 11.) ſtill precedes ſome great Viſion. And that which he with *John* Baptiſt now ſaw, was the *Spirit of God*; that is, ſuch a glorious appearance of the Divine majeſty, as I before mentioned. For the Rabbins often call the *Ruach Hakkodeſh*, or the HOLY GHOST by the name of *Schekinah*, or the Divine preſence, glorioufly appearing among them. So *Elias* expreſly tells us in his *Tisbi* *, and gives this reaſon for it, *becauſe it reſted or dwelt upon the Prophets*, and was a great token (I may add) of God's preſence with them. Whence it is, that where the *Hebrew* Text (as he goes on) ſaith, *The ſpirit of Jacob revived*, xlv. *Gen.* 27. *R. Solomon* expounds it thus, the *Schekinah*, or the HOLY GHOST reſted on him; which was departed, and, as it were, extinct before, becauſe of the grief and ſorrow wherein he had been drown'd. For the *Holy Ghoſt*, ſay they, reſts not upon the melancholy, but only on thoſe who are of a chearful ſpirit. Thus when *Hannah* ſaid to *Eli*, who fancied ſhe was drunk, *No, my Lord, I am a woman of a ſorrowful ſpirit*; the *Talmud* expounds it in this

* *Vocab.* שכן

this manner, *Thou art not to govern in this caſe, the Schekinah and the Holy Ghoſt is not upon thee,* as appears *by this, that thou haſt judged me guilty when I am innocent.*

It is all one then in their Language (as I obſerved alſo before, in the concluſion of the ſecond Chapter) to ſay that the *Divine Majeſty*, or that the *Holy Ghoſt* is upon any perſon. And therefore I doubt not but there was a glorious appearance of the Majeſty of God at our Saviours Baptiſm; ſome great unuſual brightneſs, ſignifying the Divine preſence and the Spirit of God coming to dwell in him. It is not indeed mentioned in expreſs words, that there was ſuch a *ſchekinah* or Majeſtical appearance of the Glory of the Lord; but it muſt be underſtood to be meant by the Πνεῦμα Θεοῦ, *Spirit of God.* According to the dialect of that Nation, who call the Holy Ghoſt, as I ſaid, by the name of the Divine Majeſty or Preſence; and ſo might call that Majeſty, by the name of the Holy Ghoſt or ſpirit of God. And *Juſtin Martyr* ſaith expreſly, in his diſputation with the *Jew*, that at our Saviours Baptiſm, Πῦρ ἀνήφθη ἐν τῷ Ἰορδάνῃ, *A fire was lighted in Jordan.* That is, as I underſtand it, ſuch a Divine glory appeared as there was among

among the ancient *Iſraelites*, which had, I told you, the reſemblance of a very bright fire. Which ſo good a man would not have had the boldneſs to affirm, if it had not been the conſtant tradition which paſſed among them; or rather the conſtant ſence they put upon this place. Juſt as when the Apoſtles were baptized with the Holy Ghoſt, a fiery ſubſtance gathered it ſelf about their heads, in token of a Divine preſence among them; ſo when our Lord himſelf was baptized with water, there was the like but far more glorious appearance: which ſpreading it ſelf from his head round about, made the River out of which he was newly come, look as if it were on a flame, as a ſign that he ſhould baptize, *not with water, but with the Holy Ghoſt and with fire.* And ſo *Grotius* hath obſerved, that in the Goſpel of the *Nazarens*, there were theſe words, ἐυθὺς περιέλαμψε τὸν τόπον φῶς μέγα, *ſtraight-way a great light ſhone round about the place*: which the *Syrian* Churches alſo acknowledge in their Liturgy. All which make it apparent, that Holy men thus underſtood the deſcent of the *Holy Ghoſt*, as I have explained it. And indeed S. *Luke* tells us, iii. 22. that it deſcended, σωματικῷ εἴδει, *in a bodily form or appearance.* There was ſome

ſome viſible matter broke out of the Heavens, which being the place of light and glory, we can expound to be nothing elſe but ſome very ſplendid body, a bright ſhining Light, formed by the Spirit of God, which *came down* from above, juſt *as a Dove* with wings ſpread is obſerved to do, and *lighted upon* our Saviours head.

Theſe *three* laſt phraſes are remarkable. For when the Evangeliſts ſay it *came down*, they ſpeak in the conſtant ſtile of the holy language concerning the appearance of the Majeſty of God, xix. *Exod.* 11, 20. Of whom, as *Maimonides* adds, the Scripture ſpeaks in the ſame manner, when it deſcribes his beſtowing any gifts, or vouchſafing any ſpecial token of his favour upon men. *For we* * *being in a low condition in reſpect of him, who is the moſt high, not in reſpect of place, but of his eſſence, majeſty and power; whenſoever He is pleaſed to give wiſdom to any one, or to pour down the gift of prophecy upon him, that abode of the ſpirit of prophecy, or the habitation of the majeſty and preſence of God in any place is called his* GOMING DOWN; *and the taking away of prophecy, or the receſſion of the Divine majeſty, is called his* GOING UP: For which he cites xi. *Numb.* 17. xxxv. *Gen.*

* More Nevoch. Part. 1. Cap. 10.

Gen. 13. In this language the Holy writers of the New Teſtament here ſpeak: who knew very well that the Divine Spirit is every where, and doth not move from place to place; but ſay it *came down*, becauſe there was an outward viſible appearance of a great glory, which indeed deſcended from above, and declared him, on whom ſuch a majeſty dwelt, to be filled with the gifts of wiſdom and prophecie, and all other powers of the *Holy Ghoſt*. And in the ſame manner they expreſs the unexpected communication of Divine gifts to the *Gentiles*, on whom the Holy Ghoſt *fell* or *came down*, as they heard the word, x. *Acts* 45. xi. 15. That is, there was a ſenſible token of the Divine preſence among them, though no viſible majeſty deſcended; for *they heard them ſpeak with tongues and magnifie God.*

But here, there were both all the gifts of the *Holy Ghoſt* beſtowed, and alſo ſuch a viſible glorious Majeſty, as there was at the giving of the Law: which not only came down, but *light upon our Saviour*, as that glory did on the top of mount *Sinai*, xix. *Exod.* 18, 20. This was a thing, as you ſhall hear, which was never known before, that the *glory of the Lord* ſhould come

come and reſt upon any perſon. It could denote him to be no leſs than the *Holy one of God*: From whom, as from Gods moſt holy place, he would hereafter communicate all his bleſſings to men.

And the more fully to expreſs this, it is very obſervable, that the *glory* which now appeared came down *as a Dove* doth: which is the very manner wherein *R. Solomon* deſcribes the deſcent of the Divine majeſty in former times. *The Throne of God* (ſaith he, upon thoſe words, i. *Gen.* 2. *The Spirit of God moved*, &c.) *ſtood in the air, and hovered over the face of the waters, by the Spirit of his mouth who is moſt bleſſed, and by his Word, juſt* AS A DOVE *ſtretches her wings over her Neſt.* For it is not certain whether this glorious appearance had the form of a Dove, or only deſcended in the ſame manner as a Dove doth, when it came upon our Saviour, and encircled his head.

But that there was ſuch a *glorious Majeſty* appeared and lighted on him, ought not to ſeem incredible to any man that believes the Holy Books of the Old Teſtament; as *Origen* * ſhows againſt *Celſus*, who fooliſhly brings in a *Jew* ſpeaking againſt * *Lib.* 1.

againſt this apparition. If he had made an *Epicuræan*, ſaith He, deride this report, there had been ſome congruity in it: but it is ridiculous to pin ſuch words upon a *Jew*, who believes things altogether as ſtrange, nay, far more wonderful. To paſs by what we read that God ſaid to *Adam*, *Noah*, *Abraham* and others, what doth he think concerning *Ezekiel?* who ſays that *the Heavens were opened, and he ſaw Viſions of God*, i. 1. and *ver.* 28. That *this was the appearance of the likeneſs of the glory of the Lord.* And the ſame *Iſaiah* reports concerning himſelf, *I ſaw the Lord ſitting upon a Throne*, &c. vi. 1. Which of theſe are more to be credited; *Ezekiel* who ſays *the Heavens were opened*, &c. and *Iſaiah*, who writes that he *ſaw the Lord*, &c. or *Jeſus*, who ſays that *the Heavens were opened to him, and he ſaw the Spirit of God deſcending like a Dove, and lighting upon him?* This is enough to ſtop the mouth "of any *Jew*, eſpecially ſince the power of "*Jeſus* (as *Origen* proceeds) not only then "when he was on earth far excelled "theirs: but ſtill remains now that he is "in Heaven, for the converſion and bet-"terment of thoſe, who by him believe in "God.

And

And as for others, He tells *Celſus*, that all thoſe who admit Providence, confeſs that God hath ſometimes forewarned men in their ſleep, of things which much concerned their ſafety. And therefore it is no ſuch ſtrange thing, if that power which figures the mind in a dream, ſhould impreſs the ſame or the like form upon it, when a man is awake: and repreſent things as ſenſibly to him, as if he ſaw them with his eyes and heard them with his ears. And why that ſhould not be as really ſeen, if God pleaſe, which is repreſented to a man in his imagination; no body can give any reaſon.

As for that which *Celſus* objects, that the Goſpel never tells us, our Saviour was wont to mention this and appeal to it, in his preaching to the people; He tells him that he did not mind how unſeemly it was for our Saviour to divulge himſelf what was ſeen and heard at *Jordan*, who forbad his Diſciples to publiſh that which they beheld and heard on the holy Mount. There was a fit time for the open proclaiming of both, by others, not by himſelf. For the manners of our Saviour were far from that περιαυτολογία, vain oſtentation

tion and much talk of himſelf, which ſuch a man as *Celſus* might be guilty of. He choſe by his works, rather than by his words, to tell them that he was the Chriſt. Which made the *Jews* ſay, *How long doſt thou hold us in ſuſpence? If thou be the Chriſt, tell us plainly*, x. *John* 24. So he did, but it was by that which was more convincing than his teſtimony of himſelf could then be. *I told you and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Fathers name, they bear witneſs of me, ver.* 25. That one work which he had wrought juſt before, was ſo miraculous, that the like had not been heard of ſince the world began, ix. 32. For he had opened the eyes of a man who was born blind; as they themſelves could not deny; for the mans Parents teſtified that he could never ſee till now; and he affirmed it was *Jeſus* who had given him his ſight. If they had not been blinder than He, this might have opened their eyes to ſee who our Saviour was without any further telling. For what could He ſay of himſelf more than this Miracle ſpake: which others reported, not He? It told them loudly enough, would they have heard, that he had the power of God in him; one of whoſe prerogatives it is (cxlvi. *Pſal.* 8.) *to open the*

eyes

eyes of the blind. And *John* Baptiſt alſo had told them plainly, that *he ſaw the Spirit deſcending from Heaven, like a Dove, and it abode upon him,* i. 32. Here was an unexceptionable witneſs of the truth of this ſtory, which *John* preſently publiſhed. And they had reaſon to believe him, becauſe he that authorized him to adminiſter that Baptiſm, which they received, gave him this for a ſign whereby he ſhould know the Chriſt when he ſaw him; *Upon whom thou ſhalt ſee the Spirit deſcending and remaining on him, the ſame is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghoſt. And I ſaw, and bare record, that this is the Son of God,* ver. 33, 34.

He could be no leſs, on whom ſuch a Divine Glory, not only deſcended, but alſo *remained* and took up its abode with him. That's the laſt thing to be conſidered, and the chiefeſt of all. He had not a mere glance of this viſible Majeſty, which did not make a tranſient appearance: but he ſaw it *remaining* on him. It ſtaid for ſome time there, as if it intended to make him its habitation and dwelling place. And ſo it did; for as *He* ſaw the viſible Divine majeſty or glory remaining on him then; ſo the thing ſignified by it continu-

ed alway; and made *all* ſee, if they would attend, that he was the Sanctuary or moſt holy Place, in which God was, and had taken up his reſidence for ever. The body of *Jeſus*, as I ſaid before, is now become the *Temple of God*; not made by man, but by God himſelf in the Virgins womb. There God manifeſted himſelf perpetually by ſenſible effects, as I ſhall ſhow you preſently; declaring *Jeſus* to be his Son, in whom *the fulneſs of the Godhead dwelt bodily*.

After this viſible Majeſty diſappeared, the preſence of God within him was very apparent. For he came away from *Jordan*, ſaith S. *Luke*, *full of the Holy Ghoſt*, iv. 1. And having been tempted a while in the wilderneſs, *he returned* from thence, *in the power of the Spirit into Galilee*, *ver.* 14. There he taught in his own City, and opened the Book at that very place of *Iſaiah*, where he ſaid, *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me*: which Scripture was that day fulfilled in their ears, *ver.* 18, 21. And at *Cana*, in that Country he began to work miracles, and *manifeſted forth his glory*, ii. *John* 11. That is, ſhowed indeed that the Divine Majeſty ſpoken of before, remained in him. Of which glory they did not

not ſee ſo little as a flaſh or two, but *they beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father*, i. 14. He caſt about every where ſuch rays of glory and majeſty as declared him to be no leſs perſon than God's *only begotten Son*: and theſe they *beheld*, and were conſtant eye-witneſſes of, to the end of his life. For *he went about doing good, and healing all that were oppreſſed of the Devil; for God was with him*, x. *Acts* 38. This was all his buſineſs, to beſtow benefits upon mankind, and to relieve thoſe who were otherways helpleſs, but only by a Divine power. As was notorious in his frequent diſpoſſeſſion of Devils, and opening the eyes of him who was blind from his birth; and after that, raiſing *Lazarus* from the dead, in which great work *they ſaw the glory of God*, xi. *John* 40. Who *did not give the Spirit by meaſure to him*; that is, with ſuch reſtriction as he himſelf gave it to his Apoſtles at the firſt: *But the Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands*, as the Baptiſt ſpeaks, iii. *Joh.* 34, 35. *It pleaſed the Father, that in him ſhould all fulneſs dwell*, i. *Coloſſ.* 19. So that none could have any thing of the Spirit, but from his hands, and he could communicate what he pleaſed. Which is a ſign

that he was the place, where the Divine majeſty and the Holy Spirit now dwelt, and had taken up its reſidence among men; who muſt all repair to him, if they would receive the Holy Ghoſt, or any bleſſing from above.

What greater argument could there be, that he was the Son of God, than this, that he had *all things* now *put into his hands*, to do what he pleaſed on *Earth*: and received the *Holy Ghoſt* in ſuch a viſible Majeſty, as a pledge that he ſhould ſhortly have all power in *Heaven* too, at the right hand of God? It was fit that this glorious teſtimony of the Holy Ghoſt to him ſhould be accompanied with the voice of God, which came out of that or the like cloud, ſaying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed.* So we ſhall have ſtill farther reaſons to acknowledge him, if we do but make theſe following Reflections upon what hath been here diſcourſed.

One is, that here was not ſo little as the appearance of an Angel to him, by whom God declared his will to the Prophets: but a far more illuſtrious manifeſtation of the Divine Glory, which came down upon

on him and declared him more than a Prophet. *Maimonides* doubts not to ſay * that *all Prophecy was by the mediation of Angels,* xvi. *Gen.* 9. xxii. 15. *Moſes* himſelf began to be a Prophet by this means, iii. *Exod.* 2. *The Angel of the Lord appeared to him, in a flame of fire in the Buſh.* For which cauſe, he thinks, God afterward appointed *two Cherubims* to cover the Ark, that the people might be bred up in the belief of Angels. And God is ſaid *to dwell* between them, and *to ride* upon them; becauſe all Prophecy was carried by them from God to men. But here is ſomething far beyond this way of communication between God and Men. For not an Angel appeared or ſpake unto him: But that Divine Glory which dwelt between the Cherubims, deſcends upon him and makes him its reſting place; and God himſelf ſpeaks to him at the ſame time out of that Glory, calling him his *Son,* and bidding all *hear him.* This was a manifeſt declaration of his high and ſingular prerogative; and a ſign that no leſs than the *fulneſs of the Godhead* dwelt in him: So that he knew, as I ſaid before, the mind of God, not by Viſions and Dreams, or by mediation of Angels, but by a more intimate familiarity with God, dwelling and reſiding in him.

* *More Nevoch. Part.* 3. *cap.* 45.

For you may obſerve further (which is another thing very remarkable) that though there had been formerly an appearance of a *Schekinah*, of the Divine preſence, that is, or glory of God, when the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt were imparted to ſome perſons: Yet we never read that this *Schekinah* came down upon any man, much leſs that it remained on him, but upon *Jeſus* only. When the LXX. Elders were to receive a portion of *Moſes* his Spirit, God ordered them to be brought unto the Tabernacle of the Congregation, and ſays, he would come down and talk with *Moſes there*, and take of the Spirit which was upon him, and put it upon them, xi. *Numb.* 16, 17. Accordingly you read (*ver.* 24.) that as they ſtood round about the Tabernacle, *the Lord came down in a cloud* (*ver.* 25.) that is, in ſuch a manner as now the Holy Ghoſt deſcended at our Lord's Baptiſm: But He came not down upon them, who were about the Tabernacle; but rather (as in the next ſtory, xii. 5. and at other times) *ſtood in the door of the Tabernacle*; from whence he ſpake to *Moſes* and took of the Spirit which was on him, and gave it to the ſeventy Elders. Whereas here the *Holy Ghoſt* came down

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in a viſible glory, and pitched upon *Jeſus* himſelf: who was the Tabernacle now, where God choſe to dwell. For this *Schekinah*, as you have heard, or Divine majeſty, not only *lighted* on him, but reſted there and *remained* in him: as if God had told him who ſaw it both deſcend and abide on him; *Here will I dwell for ever, for therein do I delight.* This demonſtrated him to be more than any ever was; not merely a great Prophet, but the very Son of God. Never was there ſuch a Crown prepared for any mans head, but his. Never before did the hand of Heaven put ſuch a Diadem of Glory upon any perſon, as this which encircled, and, as I may ſay, was bound about our Saviour. This can be accounted nothing leſs than the teſtimony of the HOLY GHOST to him; that he was the *Holy one* of God, the *anointed* from above, the *King* of God's people, and *the heir of all things.*

Thus S. *Peter* you know expreſſes the honour which was now done him, when he tells *Cornelius* and his company, x. *Acts* 38. that *God ANOINTED him with the Holy Ghoſt, and with power.* The HOLY GHOST came down as an holy oil from the Heavenly Sanctuary,

which being poured on him, in ſuch a glorious Majeſty, gave him authority to be called the *Son of God*, and made him *his King*. So *John* Baptiſt acknowledged him, you remember, as ſoon as he beheld this ſtrange ſight, *and bare record* of it unto others, that *this perſon* (thus anointed) *was the Son of God*, i. *John* 34. He was now inveſted with a royal power (for that's the meaning of his being ANOINTED) and we ought, I ſhall ſhow you, to look upon this as a ſolemn inauguration of him in his Kingdom: to which he had now a title given him, together with ſome part of a Kingly Authority. And if there be any truth in the Traditions of the *Hebrews* concerning their own Ceremonies, there was ſomething remarkable in it that this ANOINTING him with the holy oil from above, was immediately after he came up out of the waters of *Jordan*. For *Maimonides* and the Doctors in the *Talmud* tell us, that they never anointed a King of the houſe of *David*, but at the ſide of a Fountain, or of a River of water. Which was the reaſon that *David* commanded his ſervants, *to bring his ſon Solomon down to* GIHON, 1 *Kings* i. 33. and there anoint him King over *Iſrael*. For this GIHON was a little River, as

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R. Solomon there notes, or the head of a River nigh *Jeruſalem*, which diſcharged it ſelf into the brook *Kidron*, and in the *Chaldee* Paraphraſe is called by the newer name of *Siloah*. It was made very famous afterward by that memorable work of *Hezekiah* (2 *Chron.* xxxii. 30.) who to take away the advantage any Enemy might make of it in a ſiege, ſtopt up the courſe of its water, and brought it by Chanels under-ground into the City of *David*. At this place without the walls of *Jeruſalem*, not in the City, *Zadok and Nathan anointed King Solomon*. That is, one of them poured out the oil, and the other anointed his head; drawing a circle with the oil upon it. For ſo they all ſay, that Kings were anointed *in the form of a Crown*, to denote the royal dignity. Which if it be true, and that they made choice of ſuch a place to ſhow (as they will have it) the perpetuity of their Kingdom; becauſe Rivers run alway, though the Cities which ſtand by them decay and may be demoliſhed: then it is very obſervable that our Lord was ANOINTED or Crowned with the Holy Ghoſt by the River JORDAN, rather than in any other place, to denote him indeed to be the King of *Iſrael*, who ſhould *ſit upon the throne of his Father*

Father David, as the Angel ſaid, *for ever and ever.*

But this I mention only by the way. The chief thing to be noted is, that now he began to reign, and entred upon his Kingdom, called the *Kingdom of God*, and the *Kingdom of Heaven*: which *John* Baptiſt told them was at hand. For this deſcent of the HOLY GHOST in ſuch a viſible majeſty did not merely give him a title to the Divine Kingdom which was to be erected by him in the world; and aſſured him that he was God's Chriſt, or ANOINTED, that is, *his King*; and endued him with ſuch royal qualities, as fitted him for that office: But it made him a King by conferring ſeveral branches of the Regal power on him, and by giving him authority to exerciſe them in the world. It is true indeed, he did not actually take poſſeſſion of his Kingdom, nor exerciſe his royal power completely, and the time of his inthroning was deferred, till he had accompliſhed the will of God other ways, and *by the ſuffering of death was crowned with glory and honour* in the Heavens. But that he did not act only as a Prophet all his life-time, but likewiſe took upon him the perſon of a King (or acted

acted as a Royal Prophet) doing many things which only the royal Authority could do, is a moſt manifeſt Truth in the Holy ſtory.

Which cannot be better explained than by the parallel caſe of his Father *David*, who was the exact type and figure of him. He was *anointed* by *Samuel* ſome years before he ſate upon the *throne of the Lord*. But as that *Unction* was the deſignation of him to the royal dignity, and a pawn or pledge of the poſſeſſion of it in due time: ſo ever after he atchieved very great things which ſpoke him to be the perſon deſigned by God for his Kingdom (as it is called, I told you, 2 *Chron.* ix. 8.) and he alſo received ſome portion of it, before he enjoyed it all entirely, 2 *Sam.* ii. 4. 9. v. 3. Juſt thus did our bleſſed Saviour, after he was ANOINTED with the *Holy Ghoſt*, give ſeveral proofs that he was a *King* (which is the meaning, you have heard, of the word CHRIST) and had received ſome of the power belonging to that high office. For *firſt* he caſt out Devils and cured all diſeaſes, at any time, when he pleaſed, only with his powerful word, and for nothing. Which were Acts of ſuch royal bounty, that he had

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reaſon to ſay, xi. *Luke* 20. *If I by the finger of God caſt out Devils, no doubt the* KING-DOM *of God is come upon you.* And *ſecondly*, over and above this, he forgave mens ſins, and remitted their offences, by releaſing many from the puniſhment of them (v. *Luke* 20.) which every one knows is a power wherewith only Kings and Sovereign Princes are inveſted. And *thirdly*, He raiſed a man from the dead, and releaſed him even from the priſon of the grave. Which certainly was the act of a *King*; and of that King who had *power over all fleſh*. So *Martha* her ſelf underſtood it, when ſhe makes it all one, to raiſe the dead, and to be that King whom God promiſed to ſend them. For when our Saviour ſaith to her, *I am the reſurrection and the life*, &c. *believeſt thou this?* Her anſwer follows in theſe terms, *Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the* CHRIST *the Son of God which ſhould come into the world*, xi. *John* 27. And laſtly, the very preaching the mind of God, and publiſhing the Goſpel of the Kingdom, with ſuch authority as he did, was the part of a King. For ſo he interprets the word *Kingdom*, when he ſtood before *Pilate*, xviii. *John* 37. Where you may learn, that all this is not the mere collection of reaſon, from

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the obſervations we make as we read the Holy ſtory; but that which our Lord himſelf affirms in expreſs words, when he was examined by *Pilate* upon this very point. For our Lord ſeeming to grant that he had a *Kingdom*, though not of this world, but Heavenly, *ver.* 36. the Governour asks him again, *Art thou a KING then?* To which he anſwers him roundly, *Thou ſayeſt that I am a KING*, i. e. yes, I am; it is as thou ſayeſt. So the reſt of the Evangeliſts report his Anſwer; *Thou ſayeſt it*, xxvii. *Matth.* 11. xv. *Mark* 2. xxiii. *Luke* 3. which is as much, in their Language, as to ſay, *it is ſo*; thou haſt ſaid right, *I am a King*. This is *that GOOD CONFESSION which he witneſſed before Pontius Pilate*, which the Apoſtle propounds to *Timothy*'s imitation, 1 *Tim.* vi. 13. He now openly owned, with the danger of his life, that, as mean as he appeared at preſent, he was appointed by God to be his Vicegerent, the King of the world: which he had manifeſted by ſeveral acts of Kingly power ever ſince he was *anointed with the Holy Ghoſt.*

And he had ſaid the ſame before, when he was brought to anſwer for himſelf in the chief Council of the *Jews*. Where the

the High Prieſt asked him, and ſaid unto him, *Art thou the Chriſt, the Son of the Bleſſed? And Jeſus ſaid, I am,* xiv. *Mark* 61, 62. Which words [*I am*] are the plain interpretation of the other phraſes in the reſt of the Evangeliſts, *Thou haſt ſaid,* xxvi. *Matth.* 64. and, *ye ſay that I am,* xxii. *Luke* 70. where you read, *ver.* 71. that hearing this confeſſion, they forbare to produce any more witneſſes, and condemned him out of his own mouth. That is, they paſſed the ſentence of death upon him, as a counterfeit (ſo they pretended) of that royal Prophet, whom they expected to come into the world. Under this character they delivered him to *Pilate,* hoping that he would likewiſe condemn him for Treaſon againſt *Cæſar*: whoſe authority they would have him believe our Saviour ſubverted, *by ſaying, He himſelf was CHRIST a King,* xxiii. *Luke* 2. So the whole multitude of his Diſciples had a little before proclaimed him (though not ſuch a King as would do *Cæſar* any harm) when they met him at the foot of the Mount of Olives, and with great joy praiſed God for all the mighty works they had ſeen, *ſaying, Bleſſed be the KING that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in Heaven, and glory in the higheſt;*

higheſt ; that is, let Heaven proſper his Kingdom, till it be made moſt glorious, xix. *Luke* 38.

There needs no more be ſaid to ſhew, that he was made a King, by this Unction of the *Holy Ghoſt* ; though the full poſſeſſion of his Kingdom and exerciſe of his whole royal power he did not attain, till he was advanced to his Throne of glory in the Heavens ; when he received from the Father the promiſe of the Holy Ghoſt to beſtow upon others (ii. *Acts* 33.) and poured it down as an holy Oil on their heads, to create them Miniſters in his Kingdom.

That was a further witneſs to our Saviour, as I ſhould now proceed to ſhow you ; but that it may be fit, before I part with this, to take notice, that this teſtimony which the HOLY GHOST now gave to him, when it *anointed* him at his Baptiſm, was ſo remarkable, that *Mahomet* hath not forgot to leave a remembrance of it in his *Alcoran*. Where he brings in God ſpeaking after this manner ; * *We have already ſent a Book* (i. e. the Law) *to Moſes, and afterward we ſent the Prophets ; and to Jeſus the Son of Mary*

* *Vid. Seld. de Synedr. Lib. 2. C. 4. n. 4.*

we

we have ſent moſt known (or eminent) *vertues, and we gave him a* TESTIMONY, *and ſtrengthened him with the* HOLY GHOST. In which words, a great Paraphraſt of theirs upon the *Alcoran*, by *known vertues or powers* given to our Saviour, underſtands the gift of working miracles; as opening the eyes of the blind, cleanſing lepers and raiſing the dead. Though by the *Holy Ghoſt*, they generally underſtand no more than the Angel *Gabriel*, who for the manifeſtation of him (as that Paraphraſt ſpeaks) was *ſent a-long with him, as his companion, whitherſoever he went*. Which notion, I imagine, they drew out of the *Jewiſh* writers, who ſay that ſuch glorious apparitions, as that at Chriſt's baptiſm, were made by the miniſtry of Angels, who were the Chariot of God, in which he was ſaid to come down to men.

But whatſoever *Mahomets* meaning was, when he ſays *God ſtrengthened him with the Holy Ghoſt*, it is an open acknowledgment of that which the Divine writers have recorded; which was ſo famous and notorious, that Infidels could not deny it. Nay, ſome of that falſe Prophets followers have ſaid expreſly, that the

Holy

Holy-Ghoſt is no Creature, but hath a ſingular production proper to it ſelf. For it is not a ſpirit after the manner of other ſpirits, becauſe it is the ſpirit of God. The ſpirit of a Man is a Creature, but the ſpirit of God is not.* It was more than an Angelical preſence then that was in our Saviour: of whoſe birth indeed the Angel *Gabriel* brought the news to his Mother, but he did not pretend that ſhe ſhould conceive by his power; no, he ſayes expreſly, *The* HOLY GHOST *ſhall come upon thee, and the power of the higheſt ſhall overſhadow thee.* And therefore at his new-birth, as I may call it, to the office of a King, it was the very ſame power of the higheſt, which in a viſible manner then overſhadowed him and remained on him; to teſtify that he was as the Angel ſaid, the *Son of God.* To conclude this; the Angelical Salutation to the bleſſed Virgin, is after this manner recited in the *Alcoran*, in the next Chapter to that before named. *O Mary, God ſends thee a good Meſſenger, by his* WORD *which is out of himſelf. His Name is Meſſias, or Jeſus Chriſt the Son of Mary, powerful in this preſent World, and in the World to come.* Where the forenamed Paraphraſt ſays, he was powerful in the preſent World *by Prophecy*, and in the

* *Vid. lib. pag.* 127.

World to come, *by Interceſſion, and Celeſtial preparation.* He ſhould have added alſo, what he ſaid before, that he was powerful here by that which is properly called *power*, the healing Diſeaſes, opening blind Mens eyes, and ſuch like works of wonders: the *Divine Majeſty* reſting on him and abiding in him, in ſo glorious a manner, that he might properly be called the *Temple of God.*

For whatſoever demonſtrations there were of Gods preſence in the Tabernacle of *Moſes*, or in the Temple of *Solomon* (which were alike filled with the *glory of the Lord*, xl. *Exod.* 34, 35. 2 *Chron.* v. 13, 14.) the very ſame tokens there were of his preſence in our Saviour. Nay, it is eaſie to ſhow that he manifeſted himſelf, in all his glorious Attributes, more in our Saviours Perſon, than ever he did in either of thoſe places. And it will be ſuch an evident demonſtration of the truth I am aſſerting, and give ſuch light to this teſtimony of the Holy-Ghoſt, who appeared in that excellent *Majeſty* which deſcended on him; that I think it will be worth my pains to make good the Parallel in ſome inſtances.

I. And

I. And firſt you may obſerve that from the *holy place* in the Tabernacle, God declared his mind and will; and made known to his People what he would have done. There God told *Moſes, he would meet and commune with him, of all things which he would give him in commandment to the Children of Iſrael*, xxv. Exod. 22. And we are told the manner of it, vii. Num. 89. *When he was gone into the Tabernacle, he heard the voice of one ſpeaking to him from off the Mercy ſeat, that was upon the Ark, from between the two Cherubims.* From thence God gave out to *Moſes* his λόγια (as the Apoſtle calls them, iii. Rom. 2.) *Oracles*, or ſuch words of direction and command, as were neceſſary for the good Government and preſervation of his People: whoſe Laws, Statutes and Judgments, came from the *holy Oracle* in the Sanctuary of God. This was a marvellous favour of Heaven to them; though nothing comparable to the manifeſtation of the wiſdome and counſel and will of God by our bleſſed Saviour. Who not only revealed his Mind more clearly and abundantly; thereby ſhowing he is the Temple of God: but told us ſuch things as never came from the former holy place; things which *eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither did they en-*

ter into the heart of man to conceive. He was the λόγος, or WORD of GOD, in this ſence as well as any other; becauſe he acquaints us with Gods mind, and declares to all Mankind his ſacred will; and, as from an *holy Oracle*, utters things ſecret from the foundation of the World. For *the Word was made Fleſh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth*, i. Joh. 14. The word *full* relates to λόγος the WORD, in the beginning of the Verſe (the other part of the Verſe being inſerted between in a Parentheſis) and carries this ſence in it, that Jeſus being fully acquainted with all the gracious counſels of God concerning Men, hath declared them to us, and made us alſo acquainted with them. He was ſo *full of truth* that he calls himſelf ἡ ἀλήθεια *the truth* it ſelf, xiv. Joh. 6. *No man hath ſeen God at any time; the onely begotten Son, he hath declared him*, i. 18. That is, he hath made God viſible to us: he as an ἐξηγητὴς, *expounder* or *interpreter* of anothers mind, hath opened to us all his ſecrets concerning our Salvation; and thereby declared that he is no leſs than the Wiſdom of God. When he appeared in the World, then *Wiſdome built her ſelf an houſe*, as *Solomon* ſpeaks, ix. Prov. 1. Which words * *Athanaſius* not unfitly accommo-

* *Orat. 3. contra Arrian.*

dates

dates to our Lord Chriſt, *Whoſe body is the houſe of Wiſdome.* And a moſt holy houſe, the dwelling place of God; from whence he hath revealed himſelf not to ſo few as one Nation, but to all the World: whom, if they would open their eyes, he hath illuminated with his Wiſdome.

R. *Bechai* I remember will have the *Ark* from whence *Moſes* heard God ſpeaking to him, to be called in their Language by the name of ארון, from אור; as much as to ſay, *becauſe of the light* which was there. Which he will have to be the Law (preſerved in the Ark) which was the Light of *Iſrael.* And juſt thus writes S. *John* concerning this WORD of God, 1. 4. *In him was life, and the life was the light of men. That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the World, v. 9.* For ſo Jeſus proclaimed himſelf, ſaying, viii. 12. *I am the LIGHT of the World.* And ſuch a *Light* he was, that all the wiſdome which was diſcovered before from the Sanctuary of God; was but Clouds and darkneſs, in compare with that which was made manifeſt by our Saviour. The beſt knowledge they had was covered and wrapt up in types and figures, till God appeared in Jeſus, and rent thoſe clouds in

pieces, by the brightneſs of his beams. They had but ſuch a confuſed apprehenſion of things in former times, that S. *Paul* compares this diſcovery of God in Chriſt, to the breaking forth of light, out of the rude Chaos, in the beginning of the world, 2 Corinth. iv. 6. *For God who commanded light to ſhine out of darkneſs* (i. Gen. 2, 3.) *hath ſhined in our hearts* (the hearts of the Apoſtles) *to give the light of the knowledge of the* GLORY OF GOD, *in the face of Jeſus Chriſt.* Some flaſhes of which light and majeſty of God in him, came from his face; not long after he entred into the World. When he was but a Childe, they wondred at his wiſdome; and *were aſtoniſhed at his underſtanding and anſwers,* ii. Luk. 47. But when he was grown up and the *Holy Ghoſt* came down from Heaven upon him, like the Glory of the Lord which filled the Tabernacle and Temple; then his Wiſdome appeared the more illuſtriouſly. And was the more amazing; becauſe they knew he was not trained up in the Schools of Learning, nor had any better breeding than a Carpenter's ſhop could give him. For ſo his Countrymen ſay, in S. *Mark*, vi. 2, 3. *Is not this the Carpenter, the Son of Mary? How comes he by theſe things? and what wiſdome is this*

which

which is given unto him? They were *aſtoniſhed* at his Doctrine, and as S. *Luke* tells us, iv. 22. *Wondred at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.* For beſides the Divinity of the matter which he ſpake, and the mighty works which accompanied it; there was a certain majeſty in the manner of its delivery. For he taught *as one having authority*, vii. *Matth.* 29. That is, as one who had power to enact and ordain new Laws (and thoſe much ſuperiour to the old) and not only to explain thoſe which were already written. He plainly alſo diſcovered a power to reward the faithful and to puniſh the diſobedient; which was ſo aſtoniſhing, that in the judgment even of thoſe who were ſent to apprehend him, *Never man ſpake like unto him*, vii. *Joh.* 46. He opened to them the Kingdom of Heaven; he revealed to them Immortal Life; he gave them Manna, of which if a Man did eat, he aſſured them he ſhould never dye: and he promiſed (which is the thing they chiefly refer to in that ſpeech) that *Whoſoever believed in him, out of his belly ſhould flow rivers of living water; which he ſpake concerning the ſpirit, which they that believed on him ſhould receive*, v. 38, 39. When this promiſe was fulfilled, then

that which *Moſes* did but wiſh for, was actually done, *All the Lords people became Prophets.* He made the gifts of *Prophecy*, and *wiſdome*, and *knowledge*, as common as ordinary diſcourſe was before. Which ſhowed that indeed God dwelt in him; elſe he could not have had all this wiſdome, much leſs communicated ſo much to others.

II. But it will not be fit to proſecute theſe things too largely; therefore let us paſs to the conſideration of the *mighty power of God* manifeſted from the place where he was ſaid to dwell; which was an evidence that he was there. And this you ſhall ſee appeared no leſs in our Saviour, as a token that God dwelt in him, and that he was become his Temple. All their *help* you know of old is ſaid to come *from the Sanctuary*, where God inhabitated, and he is ſaid *to ſtrengthen them out of Sion*, xx. Pſal. 2. Thence the Ark, upon the Cover of which the Divine Glory ſate, is called *The Ark of his ſtrength*, cxxxii. Pſal. 8. Nay, it is often called ſimply by the name of *his ſtrength*, Pſal. lxix. 61. *He delivered his* STRENGTH *into captivity, and his Glory into the Enemies hand.* And *Pſal.* cv. 4. *Seek the Lord and his* STRENGTH;

† 78.

that

that is, the Lord before the Ark of his preſence, from whence their help and ſuccour came. For whether this went, God was ſaid to go along with them to deliver them. As the Philiſtins themſelves had learnt; who hearing the *Iſraelites* had brought the Ark into the Field, began to be afraid and ſaid, *GOD is come into the Camp. Wo be to us: for there hath not been ſuch a thing heretofore*, 1 *Sam.* iv. 7, 8. That is, we fought with Men hitherto, now with God. And this is the meaning of thoſe words, lxxx. Pſal. 2. *Before Ephraim, Benjamin and Manaſſeh, ſtir up thy STRENGTH, and come and ſave us.* Thoſe three Tribes marching immediately after the Ark (for their quarter was on the *Weſt* of the Tabernacle, in which part was the moſt holy place, and the Ark in it, ii. Numb. 17, 18, &c.) it is as much as if he had ſaid, make thy ſelf ſenſibly preſent now to thy People; manifeſt thy favour towards them from thy Mercy ſeat; ſhew that thou art among us, and give us a ſign and token of thy preſence and power, by overcoming and treading down our enemies.

Now, as then he gave proof that he dwelt there, by thoſe acts of power and might:

might: ſo he made it manifeſt by all the wonderful things which Jeſus did, that he was the Sanctuary wherein he dwelt among men. From him there were ſuch emanations of power, as never flowed from the Ark it ſelf. He *ſtirred up his ſtrength* indeed (that I may borrow the ancient Language) when Jeſus appeared, *and came and ſaved them* in a diviner manner. Whenſoever he healed any deſperate Diſeaſe, it was an act of Salvation and deliverance; which told them there was a gracious preſence of God among them. When he caſt out a Devil; it was the vanquiſhing of a dreadful Enemy. And when he threw out a whole *Legion*, it was a glorious victory over a more powerful Army, than ever the *Iſraelites* by the STRENGTH of God among them, had overcome. To ſay nothing of his commanding the Winds and the boiſterous Waves, which as readily obeyed him; as the *red Sea fled when Judah was Gods Sanctuary*, cxiv. Pſal. 2. (the Divine preſence not having ſetled it ſelf then among them in any certain place) and *Jordan was driven back* before the Ark of his ſtrength. By theſe acts it plainly appeared that all things were under his Authority; not only Men and other Creatures here below;

but

but alſo Angels, Principalities and Powers: over whom he as eaſily triumphed, as the *Iſraelites* had heretofore done, by the power of God among them, over the Philiſtins, or ſuch like adverſaries. Nay, he gave his Apoſtles ſuch a power over them, that they were ready to triumph too much in theſe conqueſts. He is fain to repreſs the joy wherewith they were tranſported; and to bid them not rejoyce ſo much that the Devils were made ſubject to them, as that they themſelves were become the ſubjects of his Kingdom, and their Names written in Heaven, x. *Luk.* 20. And ſo eminent was this manifeſtation of the Divine power in him, that he did but ſpeak a word, and any thing was done that he required. In ſo much that the People were amazed, to hear him only ſay to a Devil, *Come out*, and inſtantly he left the Man and hurt him not. *What a word is this? for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean ſpirits, and they come out*, iv. Luk. 37. And upon another occaſion of the like nature, you read the ſame again, that *They were all amazed at the mighty power of God*, ix. 43. And acknowledged with juſt admiration at ſuch another ſight, that, *It was never ſo ſeen in Iſrael*, ix. Matth. 33. Among all the marvellous works of former

mer times, even thoſe done by *Moſes* himſelf, when the Divine Glory viſibly appeared on ſeveral occaſions to them, there never was any thing like to that which our Saviour now wrought; ſo quickly, without ſo much as the pains of a bare touch, by his Word only, and in all ſorts of Diſeaſes, none excepted. For at his firſt entrance upon his office, after he was anointed with the Holy-Ghoſt, he healed *all manner of ſickneſs*, and *all manner of diſeaſe*, throughout the whole Region of *Galilee*, and the adjoyning Countries, iv. *Matth.* 23, 24, 25.

III. Nor was the kindneſs and good will of God to them more plainly manifeſted from the Tabernacle and Temple, than it is to us more abundantly declared in *Jeſus Chriſt*. The Ark, the place of God's preſence, is called the TESTIMONY, xvi. *Exod.* 34. for this reaſon as well as others; becauſe it was a token of God's great love to them, and care over them; teſtifying that he dwelt among them. And out of SION, where the Houſe of his Glory, and the Ark of his Preſence was, he is ſaid, *to bleſs his people*, cxxxiv. Pſal. 3. and to give them the *bleſſing of life*, cxxxiii. 4. which may be more

more truly ſaid of *Jeſus Chriſt*, from whom now *the LORD hath commanded the bleſſing, even life for evermore*, iii. Act. 26. xi. *Joh.* 25, 26. In him he ſhowed himſelf moſt propitious to Mankind, and ſet him forth as his ἱλαστήριον, or *mercy ſeat*; iii. Rom. 25. from whence he will diſpenſe his Divine favours towards us. We need not doubt of it, for he is the Μαρτύριον, or TESTIMONY alſo, in the moſt proper ſeaſons, of the greateſt love and kindneſs that ever was, 1 *Tim.* ii. 6. This he teſtified indeed moſt of all by his Death and giving himſelf *a ranſome* for us (which the Apoſtle is there ſpeaking of, and which *Polycarp* calls in his Epiſtle to the *Philippians*, μαρτύριον τῦ σταυρῦ, the teſtimony of the Croſs) But it was apparent likewiſe by all the actions of his life. Which teſtified how *full*, he was, *of GRACE*, as well as of *Truth*: for *he went about about doing good*, x. Act. 38. The very name that *Philo* gives the Tabernacle, which he calls * φορητὸν ἱερὸν, exactly belongs to him; who was a *moveable Temple*, a *walking mercy ſeat*, an Holy place, which went about; and carried God's bleſſings to all that drew nigh unto him. All the Power he had, was uſed, not to the harm of any man living; but to the benefit, relief and

* L. 3. de vita Moſis.

comfort,

comfort, of every one that came to him. Whom did he ever refuſe, that intreated his help? What ſuitor did he turn away, that came to beg his charitable aſſiſtance? He never excuſed himſelf, either from the multitude of buſineſs, or the diſtance of the place, or the greatneſs of the thing they askt, or the many courteſies he had done to them already, or upon any other account whatſoever; but willingly went to do them ſervice: or, which is more, ſent his Divine influences afar off, to teſtifie his omnipreſent power, for the reſcuing of ſuch, as were at the point of death. And as for his Doctrine, you remember it was ſo ſweetly perſwaſive, that all the People *wondred at the words of grace, which proceeded out of his mouth,* iv. Luk. 22. So full of mercy it was, that he publiſhed a *Jubilee* (as you there read, *v.* 18.) to the miſerable World. So rich in love, that *S. John* could do no leſs than ſay, 1. iv. 9. That *in this was manifeſted the love of God towards us, becauſe that God ſent his onely begotten Son into the World, that we might live through him.*

IV. And as the Sanctuary was a place ſeparate from all others for this purpoſe, that God might dwell in it; and from thence

thence ſend them the tokens of his powerful love: even ſo was Jeſus alſo ſeparated after a ſpecial manner, to be the Tabernacle of GOD among Men. The place where the Divine Glory made its reſidence was called the *Moſt Holy*. And the Hill on which it ſtood is called *the Mountain of his HOLINESS*, xlviii. Pſal. 1. And the Ark which was the peculiar ſeat of God in the moſt holy place, is called *the Throne of his HOLINESS*, xlvii. 8. and the *HOLY Ark*, 2 Chron. xxxv. 3. Nay, it is called by the Name of HOLINESS, iv. *Num.* 20. as all the *Hebrews* interpret the place: and with great reaſon, for that which in one place, 1 *King.* viii. 8. is called *the HOLINESS*, is in another, where the ſame thing is deſcribed, 2 *Chron.* v. 9. called the ARK.

The ground of all which was, that theſe were ſeparated by Gods ſpecial command for his uſes and ſervice alone. And the Tabernacle was built by peculiar directions which he himſelf gave, and by a Divine art and skill, wherewith the workmen were inſpired, and no other. And juſt thus was the Temple of our Saviour's Body likewiſe ſet apart and ſeparated from all common fleſh, to be the dwelling place

of

of God. Man had no hand in the making of it; but it was formed in the Womb of a pure Virgin by the power of the Holy Ghoſt. Upon which ſcore, the Angel calls him before he was conceived, τὸ Ἅγιον, i. Luke 35. *that HOLY thing*, we render it (but it is the very Name of the Temple) which had not an original like other Men, being made by God alone. Nor did the good Angels only acknowledge this, but the Evil alſo call him *the HOLY one of God*, i. Mark 24. For he was again ſeparated from all other by a voice from Heaven, and by the anointing of the Holy Ghoſt, and by many other things not now to be mentioned, which declared him to be the *MOST HOLY* or *Holy of Holies*, ſpoken of by *Daniel* the Prophet, ix. 24. which *Abenezra* expounds to be meant of *Chriſt*. And the unſpotted Holineſs that was both in his Doctrine and in his life (as you ſhall hear afterward) and the innocency and purity likewiſe of his followers and attendants, were no ſmall Teſtimony added to the reſt, that God was in him. *For he did no ſin*, as S. *Peter* ſpeaks, *neither was guile found in his mouth*. And all they that *came to him* (*v.* 4, 5.) *as unto a living ſtone*, or Temple, *rejected indeed of men, but choſen of God and precious*, καὶ αὐτοὶ, *even they them-*

themſelves became living ſtones, a ſpiritual houſe, or Temple, *an holy Prieſthood, to offer up ſpiritual Sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jeſus Chriſt.* But it would be too long to note all that the holy Scriptures ſpeak of this. Therefore,

V. Let us briefly obſerve how the *Omniſcience* of God which appeared in our Saviour declared that He dwelt in him, as the punctual prediction of many things formerly declared his preſence at the Tabernacle. There *Moſes* you know made his enquiries upon all occaſions. And from thence in after Ages God gave them anſwers concerning things unknown; when the High-Prieſt ſtood before the moſt holy place, with the *Urim* and *Thummim* on his breaſt. And therefore that the World might ſee God had chang'd his Seat, and now dwelt here, in his Holy Child *Jeſus*, He declared things ſecret; and not onely foretold a number of things, both concerning himſelf and others, but manifeſted that he knew even the thoughts and purpoſes of Mens hearts, ii. *Joh.* 23, 24. And underſtood what was done at a diſtance from him, i. *Joh.* 47, 48. Which was ſo demonſtrative a proof to the true *Iſraelite* of the preſence of God in him; that im-

mediately he cries out, *Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Iſrael.*

But the manner of his *knowing what was in man* and all other things, was the moſt admirable. For whereas *Moſes* was fain ſtill to repair to one place, and inquire at the Mercy ſeat, before he could tell the mind of God: And could not ſo much as reſolve a difficult caſe about the obſervation of a Law, till he went to hear what the Lord would command concerning the perſons who were in doubt, ix. *Numb.* 8. Our Lord had no need at all to go any whither to make ſuch enquiries; but in every place, even in *Samaria*, knew the greateſt ſecrets, iv. *Joh.* 18, 19. For he himſelf was the Tabernacle of God. He was the Tent which God had pitched among Men: ſeparated unto him, as the Tabernacle and Temple were, by the viſible deſcent of the Divine Glory upon him, and by its reſiding in him. So that whereſoever he was, he had an Oracle continually within himſelf: and without any addreſſes to the moſt Holy place, or any other; knew all things, and revealed the mind of God to Men. And all this was ſo conſpicuous, that it was far better known than the preſence of the Lord upon the Ark.

Ark. For that was confined to one place, whereas *Jeſus went about doing good.* Which may be the meaning of that famous Prophecy, iii. *Jer.* 16, 17. Where he ſays, *they ſhould not make mention of the Ark any more*; that is, worſhip God before that, as the only place; But *Jeruſalem ſhould be the* THRONE OF THE LORD; to which all Nations ſhould be gathered: that is, in every part of the City (and Country too) he would appear as glorioufly, as he had done formerly in the moſt holy place of the Temple, which could be at no other time, but when Jeſus appeared among them, and ſent (by his Apoſtles) *the Law out of Zion, and the Word of the Lord from Jeruſalem*, to all Nations. ii. *Iſa.* 3, 4. The THRONE OF THE LORD, I have told you already, is in their Language, as *Maimonides* teaches us, *Every place which God ſeparates for the manifeſtation of his Divine glory.* So the Heaven is called *his Throne*, lxvi. Iſa. 1. And by that name *Jeremiah* calls their Sanctuary, xvii. Jer. 12. *A glorious high Throne from the beginning, is the place of our Sanctuary.* And ſo I told you the *Ark* is called; becauſe that was the peculiar place in the Sanctuary where he reſided. But at laſt you ſee all *Jeruſalem* (by which we may

underſtand the whole Nation) was to become the *THRONE of the LORD.* As it did when Jeſus appeared (who in perſon was ſent to that Nation alone) in whom the Divine glory ſhone illuſtriouſly in all places, whereſoever he came. They beheld the Wiſdome, the Power, the Love of God in him; not only in the Temple, where he oft appeared, but in every part of the holy City. In the ſtreets, nay in the high wayes, in the fields, in the wilderneſs, upon the ſea, there was a moſt glorious appearance of God; ſuch as never was when the Ark alone was the *THRONE of the LORD.*

VI. Which puts me in mind, and then I ſhall end this; that the *Unity* of God is as much, nay more, diſcovered in our bleſſed Saviour, as it was at the Tabernacle or Temple in former times. As there was but *one place* where God put his Name among the Children of *Iſrael*, and they were all to go to the very ſame *Oracle*; whereby they were preſerved in the belief and worſhip of *one* God: So now God hath manifeſted that this is his ONLY begotten Son; and that there is no name given under Heaven whereby we can be ſaved, but only His; and that we muſt ſeek to no

no other Mediator, but this *One*; in whom now God appears in ſuch a glory, as he never did any where elſe. And this is alſo to keep us in the belief that God is one: which may hence alſo appear by this *manifeſtation of God in the fleſh*. For whereas we call God by ſeveral attributes, the moſt holy, the moſt wiſe, the moſt powerful, and the like; yet we ſee all theſe were in one perſon Chriſt Jeſus. Which may well inſtruct us, that they all together are but One God; and that it is one eternal Majeſty, who is ſo holy, wiſe, powerful and good.

But, as I ſaid, this was better made known by our Saviour, than by the Divine Majeſty reſiding at the Temple. For during all the time that the Holy Oracle of God ſtood at *Jeruſalem*: there were alſo Oracles, which pretended gods maintained among the Gentiles. This upheld the Opinion concerning a multitude of gods: And all that *Moſes* or the Prophets could do, did not deſtroy this belief in the World; no, not root it out of *Iſrael*; till God appeared in our Lord and Saviour. Then theſe other Oracles grew mute; and it was held ridiculous to believe any more Gods than One. The Devils loſt all their

power, μετὰ τὴν τοῦ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν παρόδον, after the coming of our Saviour among Men. They are the words of *Euſebius*, who produces a ſworn enemy of Chriſtianity to avouch what he delivers, *Porphyry* by name, who makes this ingenuous confeſſion,* that Ἰησοῦ τιμωμένου, &c. *ever ſince* JESUS *was honoured, none ever perceived any publick help and ſuccour from the Gods. Æſculapius and the reſt of the Gods have withdrawn themſelves from men, and do not converſe with them.* From whence *Euſebius* argues very rationally on this manner. How come you to know, thoſe whom you worſhip, to be gods? Why did not *Æſculapius* and the reſt of his Companions overthrow the power of Jeſus, and make it of none effect? If he be a mortal Man, as you ſay (nay, perhaps you call him a jugler and a deceiver) and they indeed be Saviours and gods; What is the matter that they flee before him, and turn their backs of one that is ſo inconſiderable? Why do they yield up all the World to his power; and abandon all their ſubjects, in this ſhameful manner? If you have any ſence, you muſt conclude, that he is ſtronger than they; and that what he ſpeaks is true. For though he be but one, and as, one would ſuppoſe, alone; yet He hath driven

* *Lib.* V. *Præpar. Cap.* I.

driven away a vaſt number of gods, and made them leave the World. He hath aboliſhed their worſhip and ſervice, and expoſed them to ſuch contempt; that as they appear no longer gods, ſo they can do juſt nothing. They are not able ſo much as to ſhow themſelves, as they were wont, to their followers: But plainly diſcover that they were *Dæmons*, not *Gods*.

But on the contrary the worſhip of this JESUS, and that ONE GOD, who, he ſaith, ſent him into the World, is every day more and more propagated; and takes deeper root in the minds of all People. One would have thought that theſe gods, ſhould have beſtirred themſelves at his coming, more than ever. They ſhould have made combinations, and joyned all their forces againſt him. Their Oracles which were ſo famous, ſhould now, above all other times, have been frequented; and ſpoken moſt loudly, ſo that all the World might hear them, againſt this perſon, who came to deſtroy that Religion, and take away all that reverence which was paid them. Or if one Oracle had been dumb upon any particular cauſe; yet all of them together, one would think, ſhould not have loſt their voice and their credit,

in this faſhion. Theſe gods ſhould have had more care of their reputation, and authority; than to let this ſingle perſon, whom they pretended alſo to be ſo mean, to prevail thus mightily againſt them. For as *Plutarch* tells us, in thoſe very places where there was in times paſt, μεγάλη δόξα θεότητος, *a great glory of the Divinity*; there was nothing to do in his days, but all was vaniſht. A ſign that indeed God was more in our Saviour, than he ever had been in any other perſon or place; and that he was no where elſe; and that he would be worſhipped only in that way, which he taught and preſcribed. For they ſaw his GLORY, the GLORY as OF THE ONLY BEGOTTEN Son, (i. Joh. 14.) who had thoſe marks of a Divine Majeſty reſiding in him, that none ever had; and from whom we may expect all that the wiſdom, power, and love of God can do for us.

What ſhould we do then, but after ſuch evident proofs that God is in him; fall down, and with the moſt humble and joyful reverence worſhip him, who, as it there follows, is *full of grace and truth?* Becauſe he is full of TRUTH we ought to reſign and ſubmit our ſelves to his government;

vernment; and becauſe he is full of GRACE we ſhould always rejoyce to think that we are under his care, and we ſhould put our truſt under the ſhaddow of his wings. And that he is ſo full of both, that we may with great ſatisfaction commit our ſelves to his guidance, confide and rejoyce in him; will appear ſtill more evidently by the next Teſtimony which he received from the HOLY GHOST.

II.

Which was upon the day of Pentecoſt, ten days after he left this world; When it gave a more publick teſtimony to him, than it had done at his Baptiſm, that he was the Son of God, exalted to ſit on the right hand of the Majeſty on high. For his Apoſtles being then aſſembled together in one place, on a ſudden there came ſuch a mighty inſpiration from him, who a little before he parted with them, *breathed on them and ſaid, Receive the Holy Ghoſt*; that the ſound of it was like that of a violent blaſt of wind, when it is a coming. Which was anciently a token of a Divine preſence approaching (iii. *Gen.* 8.) and now was a ſign that by the power of this ſpirit, they

they ſhould carry all before them. For it filled *all the houſe* where they were ſitting, as they did all the World, e're long, by their preaching. And immediately a glimpſe of that Divine Majeſty or Glory appeared on them, which came down upon our Saviour at his Baptiſm, and ever after dwelt in him; *Who now ſent the Apoſtles juſt as the Father had ſent him.* For a bright flame was ſeen upon their Heads, and they *were baptized with the Holy Ghoſt and with fire.*

So S. *Luke* reports, ii. *Act.* 3, 4. That *there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire*; and *it SATE upon each of them*; a ſign that this power ſhould abide with them alway, and accompany them every where; though this viſible flame vaniſhed. The effect of which was notorious to all, even as it was apparent that Jeſus was full of the Holy Ghoſt, though none but *John* Baptiſt ſaw it coming down upon him: For *they were all filled with the Holy Ghoſt, and began to ſpeak with tongues*: Of which all *Jeruſalem* (as it there follows) yea men of all Nations were witneſſes; who heard them ſpeak in their own tongues, *the wonderful works of God*, verſ. 11. They proclaimed, that is, to all the People, whom the

the report of this ſtrange news had brought together, what wonders God had wrought by Jeſus, and what he had now done for him; having *raiſed him from the dead*, verſ. 24. and *exalted him by his right hand*, verſ. 33. *and made him, both* LORD *and* CHRIST, verſ. 36. That is, He was, now they might ſee if they would not ſhut their eyes, inthroned by God in the Heavens, and compleatly inveſted with that royal power, of which he had received ſome portion before; being now made LORD of all things, and the KING of God's People. Of which, *we*, ſay the Apoſtles, v. 32. *are his Witneſſes* (who ſaw him after he roſe again, and beheld him aſcend into Heaven) *and ſo is the Holy Ghoſt*, which he ſent from thence, as they all now ſaw and heard in divers ſenſible effects, which teſtified that he was at the right hand of God.

And here it will be fit to obſerve *three* things,

Firſt, That the HOLY GHOST was his WITNESS, (as the Apoſtles you ſee call Him) as the coming of it, was the fulfilling of what he had predicted and promiſed, a little before his *going away* from them. At the very mention of that word, they

they were very diſconſolate; and *ſorrow filled their heart.* Whereupon he chears them up with this aſſurance that he would not leave them comfortleſs, like ſo many fatherleſs Children, but *pray the Father, and he would give them another Comforter, who ſhould abide with them for ever*; and never go away from them, as he was about to do, xiv. *Joh.* 16. This he tells them was the *ſpirit of truth*, verſ. 17. *whom the Father would ſend in his Name*, verſ. 26. where he repeats this over again, and tells them what the *Holy Ghoſt* would do for them. And therefore charges them not to be troubled or afraid, but rather rejoyce to hear him ſay he was going to the Father, *who was Greater than he*; and therefore would give him power, when he went to him, to do more for them, than he could do now, *verſ.* 28. And then he adds the reaſon why he ſaid all this, verſ. 29. *Now I have told you before it come to paſs; that when it is come to paſs, you might believe.* That is, be confirmed in the belief of all that I have ſaid, and fully perſwaded I have not boaſted of a power and authority, which doth not belong to me. They might well be confident of it themſelves, and bid *all the Houſe of Iſrael know aſſuredly that God had made the ſame Jeſus whom they* cruci-

crucified, both Lord and Chriſt; when they ſaw this come to paſs, which he had foretold and promiſed ſo often: Before his Death, xv. *Joh.* 26, 27. xvi. 7. After his Reſurrection, xxiv. *Luke* 49. Juſt before his Aſcenſion, i. *Act.* 4. 8. Where he bids them not ſtir from *Jeruſalem*, but *wait for the promiſe of the Father, which they had heard of him*, and which would give them Power to be his Witneſſes every where.

It was an evident argument, when they received it, of theſe two Divine Properties in Him; *Foreknowledge*, and *Omnipotence*. They had reaſon to believe there was a Divine Majeſty in him, when he was with them on Earth; and to truſt to all he had ſaid either of himſelf, or them, or thoſe that ſhould believe on his Name; and to look upon Him now as the King of Glory, with all power in Heaven and Earth. For how could he have taken the boldneſs to foretell and promiſe ſuch a thing as this from God the Father, what hope had he to make it good; if he had not been ſure that *the Father and He were one*; (as he ſpeaks *verſ.* 20. of that xiv. *Joh.*) and that what He ſaid was by his Authority, who would juſtifie his word? Nothing

thing could have been more vain, or done him greater diſcredit after all the glory he had got, than to give this as a ſign of his truth; if he himſelf had not been ſure that *God had given all things into his hand, and that he came out from God, and was going unto God*, as it is xiii. *Joh.* 3. And what greater argument could there be, that he did not aſſume a Dignity or Title, which he had no right unto; than the verifying his word in ſo hard and difficult a caſe as this, even then when his Enemies thought he could do nothing, becauſe he was dead and buried? This muſt needs make the Apoſtles as ſure as he was; (for his confident belief could not work belief in them) and therefore He did fulfil his promiſe; and indued them with ſuch power from on high, that in a moment He brought all things which he had taught them to their remembrance; enabled them to ſpeak with all manner of Tongues, to make a Man whole with ſpeaking a word, nay to raiſe the Dead, and to give the *Holy Ghoſt* likewiſe to others who believed their word.

How came He by this power, if indeed He was not the Lord of all? Why did not his Word dye with Himſelf and fall to the ground,

ground, if he uſurped upon the prerogative of God, and laid claim to a glory which was none of his? How could it come into any Mans mind, let me ask again, to promiſe ſuch a thing as this; if he did not know what he could do? And could any man do ſuch a thing, if he were not more than a man; even the King of infinite power at the right hand of God? So the Apoſtles could not but conclude when they felt the effects of his royal power in their own hearts; and when they could make others feel them, by innumerable benefits which they beſtowed, both on their Souls and Bodies. To be able to do ſuch things on Earth as he had done, ſhewed plainly what He was: but to be able to make others do more wonderful things, when He had left the World; was ſtill a more convincing Argument, that all things were put in ſubjection under his Feet. Nothing now was more evident to them than this great Truth; whatſoever diſtruſt of it they might have before. With this mighty Inſpiration all their doubts were blown away, like the Duſt before the Wind. This fire which appeared on their Heads, purged their Souls quite from all the reliques of Infidelity; if there were any remaining. They could do nothing

now

now but ſpeak the praiſes of Jeſus, and proclaim Him with theſe Tongues to all the world to be the Lord; with a zeal as hot as fire.

The People indeed, it may be ſaid, did not hear him foretell this glorious day, and make any ſuch promiſe of the Holy Ghoſt, and therefore how could it convince them? I anſwer, it is confeſſed that He did not ſpeak of this ſo plainly to them, as He did to the Apoſtles; and therefore I have not alledged it all this time for that purpoſe: but only to ſhow that they to whom he ſo often gave hopes of the coming of the Holy Ghoſt upon them, had reaſon to rely upon its Teſtimony when it came; even upon this account, that it was the performance of his gracious promiſe to them. There are many proofs which we produce, ſeem to carry leſs force in them than really they have; when careleſs minds ſtretch them too far, to prove more than was intended. The *Jews* were to be convinced by it upon another ſcore, not by the fulfilling of his particular promiſes to the Apoſtles; which could work no further upon the People, than they believed their teſtimony who came with ſuch power from Jeſus to them. But I muſt add

alſo

alſo, that our Saviour had ſaid ſomething of this to all the people at a publick Feaſt, vii. *John* 38, 39. And when he was arraigned he openly declared to the High Prieſt and the whole Senate, that they ſhould preſently receive ſenſible tokens of his Majeſty, which now they ſo affronted. For when they adjured him to tell them whether he was *the Chriſt the Son of God*, xxvi. *Matth.* 63. though he knew they would neither believe him, if he told them, nor give him a good reaſon, if he argued with them, why they did not believe (xxii. *Luke* 67, 68.) yet he told them in expreſs terms, that he was; *ver.* 64. And then adds theſe remarkable words; *Nevertheleſs, I ſay unto you* (*i. e.* though now you do not believe what I have told you, yet mind what I ſay) *hereafter* (from this moment, ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν, xxii. *Luke* 69. or very few days hence) *you ſhall ſee the Son of man ſitting on the right hand of power.* Which can refer to nothing but the miſſion of the Holy Ghoſt, which preſently enſued, and was a certain argument that he was at God's right hand, ii. *Acts* 33. When this came they could not but *ſee*, unleſs they would be wilfully blind, that he was poſſeſſed of the Kingdom, he had ſo much ſpoken of.

It was an irrefragable teſtimony that he was the Son of the Bleſſed, and could therefore be gainſaid, becauſe he told them before-hand they ſhould *ſee* what they would not then *believe*. That is, have a manifeſt demonſtration of his glorious Majeſty in the Heavens. Which if it would not move them, nothing remained but to *ſee him*, after another faſhion, *coming in the clouds of Heaven*, as it there follows. To deſtroy, that is, ſuch incredulous wretches, who killed their King, and perſiſted ſo obſtinately in their rebellion, that they *reſiſted the Holy Ghoſt*, whom he ſent to convince them of their crime, and convert them to his obedience. So it is interpreted, xxii. *Luke* 27, 31.

II. For the power of it was ſo great, that ſetting aſide this conſideration, if he had ſaid nothing at all to them or his Apoſtles of his ſending the Holy Ghoſt; yet its coming in this manner, was an evident teſtimony both to them and all others, that he made a juſt claim to be their King. He could not elſe have ſcattered ſuch royal gifts ſo bountifully among them, as the manner of Emperors was in their Triumphs, and of Kings at their Coronation. This ſhowed that indeed he had

had the power, which the *Jews* denied him. It vindicated his rights, which they would have taken from him. It made it appear, he was what he pretended; and that not *He*, but *they* were the guilty perſons; who had condemned him, for ſaying, he was the *Son of God*. This was the very end of its coming, as our Saviour alſo told his Apoſtles a little before his death, xvi. *John* 7, 8, 9. where He ſaith, that if he went away he would ſend the PARACLETE, that is, his *Advocate* unto them; whoſe office it ſhould be, to *convince the World of Sin, of Righteouſneſs, and of Judgment*. Of this place I ſhall be able, I hope, to give a full account hereafter, together with all thoſe that relate to the Holy Ghoſt; and therefore I ſhall ſay no more of it now than this: That the end of the PARACLETE'S coming was to plead the Cauſe of our Saviour; to maintain his innocence; and to prove againſt all accuſers, that though he was condemned by men, yet he was acquitted by God, and had ſaid nothing but the truth.

For obſerve but the crime whereof he was accuſed, and for which he was ſentenced by the *Jews*, and you will ſoon ſee

that nothing could clear him ſo much as this. The great thing they laid to his charge, as you have heard already, was that he affirmed, when they adjured him to ſpeak his thought, that he was *the Chriſt the Son of the Bleſſed.* This was the blaſphemy, which they pretended wounded their hearts with grief when they heard it, and for which they adjudged him to be worthy of death. Now what could demonſtrate the vileneſs of this calumny, and prove him not guilty, more than ſuch a power poſſeſſing his followers even after he was dead, as they ſaw in himſelf when he was alive? Nay, a far greater, which declared, as they truly ſaid, that he was *Lord of all*? x. *Acts* 36. He could not have done ſuch things, as they beheld were wrought at the invoking of his Name, if he were not truly the *Son of God.* The Apoſtles might have called long enough upon him, before they had made a man lame from his Mother's womb, walk up and down and leap and praiſe God; if he whom they crucified, were not exalted by God's right hand, to be a *Prince and a Saviour.* And it had been the vaineſt thing of all, for the Apoſtles to go and preach up the authority of a dead man, and who was ignominiouſly crucified,

ed, as a great Malefactor; if they had not known that the *Holy Ghoſt* from him was ready at hand in every place and time, to be his ADVOCATE, and take his part againſt all gain-ſayers.

This Heavenly *Witneſs* never failed to appear when there was need of him, to juſtifie our Saviour, and to ſet all things right in the opinion of the World; by reverſing their falſe judgment, and by eſtabliſhing and verifying the ſentence he had paſſed on himſelf; when he ſaid that he was the *Son of God.* The Tables were now turned by the appearance of this PARACLETE, who pleaded ſo ſtrongly and convincingly, that many who had before accounted him an evil doer, were now forced to alter their mind and confeſs him to be a righteous perſon. They who had reviled him, now gave him worſhip and honour. They that cried Crucifie him, ſaid as the Centurion, when they heard the HOLY GHOST ſpeak on his behalf, *Sure this was the Son of God.* And all thoſe who were ſo hardy as to *reſiſt the Holy Ghoſt* (vii. *Acts* 51.) were fain to oppoſe it with rage and throwing ſtones; for in any other manner they were not able *to reſiſt the wiſdom and the*

ſpirit, whereby S. *Steven* (a man *full of the Holy Ghoſt*) ſpake to them and reaſoned with them, vi. *Acts* 9, 10.

So great a teſtimony was this of the HOLY GHOST to *Jeſus*, that the Apoſtles were not fit to be his *Witneſſes*, till they had received it, xxiv. *Luke* 48. i. *Acts* 8. But after it came upon them and joyned its teſtimony with theirs, then they defended his cauſe ſo ſucceſsfully, that *a great company of the Prieſts*, the greateſt enemies to it, yielded themſelves and became *obedient to the faith*, vi. *Acts* 7. Then if any one asked, how dare you contradict the ſentence of the High Court, to which all men are bound upon pain of death to ſubmit (xvii. *Deut.* 9, 12.) what can you ſay to juſtifie this preſumption, in maintaining his Righteouſneſs, whom the Grand Council of the Nation hath condemned to ſuffer death? They could ſoon make this reply, Let the HOLY GHOST anſwer you; hear what he ſays to you: If He do not ſpeak enough for us and for *Jeſus* to ſatisfie you, then we refuſe not to die; you may deal with us as the deſpiſers of God and his Law. And ſo mightily were they aſtoniſhed and perplexed by the pleadings of the HOLY GHOST,

GHOST, that the Sanhedrim (the Supreme Court of Judicature among them) knew not what to ſay to the Apoſtles, nor what to do with them. They only clapt them in priſon for preaching *Jeſus* (iv. *Acts* 3.) and threatned farther ſeverity if they did not deſiſt (*ver.* 21.) but they durſt not proceed to paſs the ſentence of death upon them, according as the Law directed; the people glorifying God ſo heartily for what they ſaw them do by the power of the Holy Ghoſt. Nay, ſo much were ſome of this great Council ſtaggered, that according to the perſwaſion of *Gamaliel*, a great Maſter among them, they let the Apoſtles go free, after a ſecond impriſonment, leſt *perhaps they ſhould be found fighters againſt God, ver.* 39. If this be an humane project, ſays that wiſe man, do not trouble your ſelves about it; for it will come to naught, as the vain attempts of others have done, who at the firſt drew much people after them. But if theſe men prove to be authorized by God, and he will have it ſo; who can overthrow it? We had beſt take heed how we proceed in a buſineſs, wherein we may chance to have God againſt us. It is better in my judgment to be quiet, and ſee what the iſſue will be, leſt in ſtead of contending

with men, we be found to oppoſe God Almighty himſelf.

III. And the iſſue was this (which is the laſt thing) that by the power of this *Advocate* alone, and no other, our Lord *Jeſus* actually obtained a Kingdom in ſpite of all the oppoſition that could be made againſt him. This was the greateſt teſtimony of the *Holy Ghoſt* to him, which effectually proved him to be a King, by winning him a Kingdom; and perſwading men to ſubmit unto him, though he was inviſible, and not like to reward their ſervices in this World at all, but only in another. It proclaimed him all abroad in the World to be the Lord of life and glory, and by the mere *preaching of the Goſpel with the Holy Ghoſt ſent down from Heaven* (as S. *Peter* ſpeaks, 1 i. 12.) the Nations were ſubdued to him and acknowledged him for their Sovereign.

The High Prieſt and Council of *Jeruſalem*, as it there follows in v. *Acts* 40. deſiring to diſcourage the Apoſtles in this preaching, ordered them to be beaten, and then commanded them to ſpeak no more in the name of *Jeſus*, for fear of a worſe puniſhment that might follow. Alas!

Alas! vain men, that thought to choak this Truth, and bury this report concerning *Jeſus*. Did they think it was in their power to murder his Name, as they had done Him? and by ſuch means as theſe prevent his Faith from ſpreading it ſelf any further? They were mightily miſtaken in the courage of theſe *Twelve men*, who *rejoyced that they were counted worthy to ſuffer ſhame for his Name*: and as *unlearned* and *ignorant* as they found them (iv. *Acts* 13.) not only perſwaded many in that Country to believe *Jeſus* to be the Lord, but carried the fame of him to all Nations. For they received another kind of *Mandate* from him, which they were reſolved to obey; nothing doubting but the power of the Holy Ghoſt would go along with them to proſper their attempt. The *Jewiſh* Rulers ſaid, *Speak not at all, nor teach in the name of Jeſus*, iv. *Acts* 18. But *Jeſus* their Maſter had ſaid, *Go ye into all the World, and preach the Goſpel to every Creature*, xvi. *Mark* 15. Or as it is in S. *Matthew* xxviii. 19, 20. *Go ye and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt: Teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I have commanded you.* They durſt not therefore but go, eſpecially when

the

the power of the Holy Ghoſt came down upon them on purpoſe, that they might be able to ſpeak in his name, and win him ſubjects in all the world, by proving that he was perfectly *Lord and Chriſt*. And ſo you read in S. *Luke* xxiv. 47, 48, 49. *It behoved Chriſt to die and riſe again, that repentance and forgiveneſs of ſins ſhould be preached in his name among all Nations. And ye are witneſſes of theſe things. And behold I ſend you the promiſe of my Father: but tarry ye at Jeruſalem* (that is, before you go about this buſineſs) *until ye be indued with power from on high.*

Now here do but conſider with me, theſe *three* things. *Firſt*, the vaſtneſs of this deſign; *Secondly*, the poorneſs of the means; and *thirdly*, the weakneſs and ineptitude of the Inſtruments which were to be imployed by him: and you will ſoon ſee what ſervice the *Holy Ghoſt* did him; without whoſe power he would never have attempted ſuch things, or never have atchieved them. They are all in that place now mentioned, xxviii. *Matth.* 19. *Go and teach all Nations*, &c. See here what a compaſs he takes for his Kingdom, no leſs than all the World. Wherein he intends to ſettle new Laws, and advance

a government proper to himſelf, eſtabliſhed upon a Doctrine not at all taking with fleſh and bloud. Who is there that ever went about any ſuch thing, or had ſuch a thought in his mind? not only to conquer, but to change the Religion of all the world, and aboliſh thoſe Laws and Cuſtoms which had ſtood for ſo many Ages? What Arms or Ammunition did he provide them withal for this purpoſe? With what forces did he ſend them? Or by what means did he hope to win Kings and Princes to reſign their Crowns to him, and ſubmit themſelves to his Orders?

Behold, here a new wonder, which is the ſecond thing I now named: He bid them go and PREACH. How could any one fancy he ſhould overcome Nations with his breath? Could he take words to have ſuch force in them, as to perſwade whole Countries that never ſaw him to become his ſubjects? What ſtrange Orators muſt theſe be, who could draw men of ſuch different languages, natures and inclinations, in all the world after them? Where were they bred to learn ſuch powerful Rhetorick, as ſhould charm the hearts of all that heard them? From what School did they come, or by whom were

were they inſtructed in the art of catching Souls? Alas! they were very illiterate and ignorant men, Fiſhermen and ſuch like ruſtick people, whom Chriſt called to be Fiſhers for Souls, and ſent to draw hearts to him. And I remember, *Plato* in his *Phædrus*, when he would expreſs a block, a rude and unbred fellow, ſays he was ἐν ναύταις τεθραμμένον, bred up among *Mariners*. Very unlikely Inſtruments theſe were for his purpoſe; if he had been to take counſel of Philoſophers, and intended to teach men by no ſtronger arguments than theirs. They were the moſt unfit men that could be choſen to be his Embaſſadors; if he had not been another kind of Lord and Maſter, and they had not gone with other kind of inſtructions, than the world had known before.

And that is the *third* wonder, enough to aſtoniſh any conſidering man, that they who, as *Euſebius* notes, could ſcarce ſpeak their own language well, but were mockt for *Galileans*, whoſe dialect was the moſt broad and ungentile of all the Nation; that theſe, I ſay, ſhould go to ſpeak to all the Nations of the World, with hope to perſwade them. Alas! they were not fit to be Maſters to ſo much as one ſingle perſon,

ſon, much leſs to teach a Country School; how then could they undertake to teach the whole World? What King, what Law-giver, what Philoſopher, either *Greek* or *Barbarian*, as the ſame *Euſebius* proceeds*, ever dreamt of any ſuch deſign as this? They held their labour well beſtow'd, if they could eſtabliſh their Doctrine and Laws in one City, or perhaps in one Country; but never thought themſelves able to ſpread them any further. Whereas *Jeſus* οὐδὲν ξυντὸν καὶ ἀνθρωπινὸν διανοηθεὶς, meditating nothing that was common to mortal men, nothing that was merely humane; ſays confidently to theſe contemptible men whom he had choſen to be his Emiſſaries; *Go*, now that I bid you, *and teach all Nations.*

* *Lib. 3. demonſtr. Evang.*

But ſuppoſe the Diſciples ſhould have ſaid to him, as well they might; Though we are ready to do any thing for thy ſake, yet how ſhall we accompliſh this? How for example ſhall we ſpeak to the *Romans*, of whoſe language we are ignorant? Or how ſhall we teach the *Egyptians*, and the *Indians*, and the *Scythians*; who have but one tongue which we learnt of our Mothers, and that but a rude one neither? We ſhall ſtand dumb before them and ſay nothing.

nothing. They will take us for a company of fools, and we ſhall look like mere ſtatues and images of men. Or if we could ſpeak their languages, what hope have we to prevail with them? Who will be perſwaded by ſuch as we, to forſake the Religion of their Countrie, and to embrace thine who art a ſtranger to them? Truly this had been but a rational queſtion; if our Saviour had not taken care to prevent it, by adding thoſe words to his *Mandate*; *Lo, I am with you alway to the end of the world.* He had ſaid a little before, *ver.* 18. *All power in Heaven and Earth is given to me.* Go therefore and teach all Nations; advance my authority, and ſpread my Kingdom; and do not doubt but you ſhall effect the buſineſs; for I who have all power will be with you. And ſo he was, by the power of the Holy Ghoſt who was his *Advocate*; for he gave them, preſently after, the gift of tongues; he accompanied them every where, if they did but mention his Name, with ſigns and miracles; yea the very ſhadow of ſome of them did more than all the power of Medicines. This was a very great demonſtration of his ſupreme dominion over all Creatures. Nothing could be more effectual to induce men to obey him,

to

to whom they ſaw every thing elſe was ſubject. Without this they could never have moved men to believe that he was the Lord; but this gave it ſufficient credit.

For ſuppoſe they had ſtood up in the places of popular concourſe, and ſaid, We come to preach to you in the name of *Jeſus*, and require you to ſubmit your ſelves to him, whom God hath made the *Lord of all*. He was born of the ſeed of *David*, a great King in *Iſrael*, did many wonders in that Nation, though he was hated and rejected by them, and delivered to *Pontius Pilate*; by whom he was crucified; but God raiſed him out of his grave, and we ſaw him go to Heaven, where he is inthroned in the moſt glorious Majeſty, and reigns over all Angels, as well as mankind. Caſt away therefore your ancient Gods, who are his ſubjects. Forſake preſently all your ſuperſtitious Rites and Ceremonies. Believe on this perſon; ſubmit to his government, and obey his commands. Though you get nothing in this world by it, but perhaps may loſe all you have; he will reward you for it in his Heavenly Kingdom. What force do you think there would have been in ſuch a ſpeech,

ſpeech, to perſwade the Nations far diſtant from *Jeruſalem*, to fall down before him as their Sovereign? Would they not have ſmiled and ſaid, What do theſe bablers mean to bring us theſe ſtrange ſtories from a foreign land? Why ſhould *we* acknowledge him to be our King, whom his own Country-men would not ſuffer to reign over them? Shall we become the ſubjects of one whom we never ſaw, nor heard of until now? and venture the loſs of all our liberties, and perchance of our lives, for one whom they confeſs to be crucified and dead? What likelihood is there, that he ſhould riſe again from the dead, who could not keep himſelf, when he was alive, from being put to death?

Truly, ſaith *Euſebius*, when I conſider the mere doctrine they were to preach, I cannot ſee how they could hope to draw the people to their belief. But then when I conſider how they did prevail every where, at *Rome*, at *Alexandria*, at *Antioch*, in all other places; I muſt have recourſe to a Divine power, which ſucceeded this Doctrine. *Jeſus* plainly declared by putting them upon the attempt, that he was confident he had all power to get himſelf a Kingdom by this preaching.

And

And by the iſſue it appeared that it was no preſumption wherewith he was poſſeſſed, inſtead of a well grounded confidence. They preached, as he bad them; but it was not with ſuch Rhetorick, as is in uſe among us: not *with the enticing words of mans wiſdom*, with eloquent expreſſions, enchanting language, or mere plauſible arguments; but *in the demonſtration of the Spirit, and of power*, 1 *Cor.* ii. 4. The HOLY GHOST from Heaven preſently appeared whereſoever they preached, to juſtifie their words, and to teſtifie, by many miraculous operations, that *Jeſus* was no leſs than they affirmed. This evident demonſtration perſwaded mens minds. This was ſuch a power, that the people were ready to take *them* for Gods; and imagined that *Mercury* and *Jupiter* were come down from Heaven to them: and thereupon prepared publick ſacrifices, to be offered in their honour, xiv. *Acts* 13. Natural reaſon told them that ſuch things could not be done by mortal nature; but they muſt be concluded to be the works of ſome God, though no body told them that they were. And therefore this was all they had to do, for their own ſatisfaction, to enquire by what power and authority the Apoſtles did theſe wonders, ſince they

themſelves confeſſed that they were but men. And here now they took occaſion to let them know, that it was *Jeſus* who did theſe Miracles. Him they preached; and him they hereby proved to be the Lords ANOINTED; who by this power would prevail, notwithſtanding the fierce oppoſition that was made againſt his authority.

For, as you read in a devout addreſs which the whole company of believers made to God, *the Rulers were gathered together, and the Kings of the Earth ſtood up againſt the Lord and againſt his Chriſt.* At their firſt entrance upon this work, there were mighty endeavours to overthrow it; juſt as there had been againſt his holy child *Jeſus*, *whom he had ANOINTED*, that is, promoted to a greater glory than he had on Earth. And therefore they deſire God to go along with them, and *ſtretch forth his hand to heal*; *and that ſigns and wonders might be done by the name of his holy child Jeſus*; for the propagating of this Religion, which it was not in their own power to advance, iv. *Acts* 26, 27, 30. Now this was a further teſtimony of the power and glory of *Jeſus*, that when a ſolemn addreſs was made to God, and they repreſented to him

him their deſign; they were ſo far from receiving any diſcountenance from him, that he incouraged and promoted this undertaking. For the place where they prayed *was ſhaken*, by a powerful inſpiration which came upon them all, as it had done upon the Apoſtles: *And they were* ALL *filled with the Holy Ghoſt, and they ſpake the word of God with boldneſs*, ver. 31.

III.

And this leads me to the laſt Teſtimony which the HOLY GHOST gave to him, by deſcending upon other perſons as well as upon the Apoſtles; though not in ſuch a viſible form as it did on the day of *Pentecoſt*. The place indeed was SHAKEN where theſe believers were aſſembled, by the like *mighty wind* I ſuppoſe as filled the houſe where the Apoſtles received the *Holy Ghoſt*, ii. *Acts* 2. But there were no fiery tongues now appeared, as there did then: Nor do we afterwards read of any ſuch ſenſible ſign of an inviſible power coming upon them, as this *ſhaking* of the place was, when the Holy Ghoſt firſt deſcended upon the body of the Church. But whenſoever the Apoſtles laid their hands upon any perſon who be-

lieved in *Jeſus* and was baptized; preſently the *Holy Ghoſt* fell down upon them, and they ſpake with tongues and propheſied, viii. *Acts* 15, 17. xix. 6. This *laying on of their hands*, was ever after the only external ſign of the Divine power (for that's the meaning of *ſtretching out the hand*, in the place juſt before named, iv. *Acts* 30.) wherewith they ſhould be endued at the requeſt of the Apoſtles. Which was a plain demonſtration of the royal Majeſty and munificence of *Jeſus*, whoſe Servants and Miniſters theſe were: and hereby the HOLY GHOST bare record to him, that he was the *Son of God*.

So this very Apoſtle teaches us in the *ſecond* Chapter of this Epiſtle, where he tells them to whom he writes, that he need not be very ſolicitous to preſcribe them Antidotes againſt thoſe Antichriſtian doctrines, which then began to poiſon the Church: becauſe they had *an Unction from the holy One, and knew all things*, 1 *John* ii. 20. The HOLY GHOST, that is, was their ſecurity from infection; which is here called the UNCTION or *anointing*, 1. becauſe by the coming down of this upon our Saviour, He was made the CHRIST or anointed of God, x. *Acts* 38.

38. And 2. the Apoſtles when they received it were made the principal Officers in his Kingdom, and endued with ſuch a power to remit ſins and unlooſe men from the puniſhment of them as he had, xx. *Joh.* 22, 23. And 3. all others to whom they imparted this gift were openly declared *the children of God*, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joynt-heirs with Chriſt, viii. *Rom.* 16, 17. This UNCTION made them all *Kings and Prieſts unto God, and they reigned with him on Earth*, v. *Rev.* 10. Enjoyed, that is, many royal priviledges and liberties at preſent, for which they were bound perpetually to praiſe him; beſide the right it gave them to an Heavenly Kingdom, where they ſhould *ſit down with him in his Throne*, as He was in the Throne of his Father, iii. *Rev.* 21. For the Thrones of the Eaſtern Princes were wide and large, as I told you before, where others might ſit down by them, if they pleaſed to admit any to that high honour, which this King of Kings promiſes to grant to his faithful followers.

No wonder then that they who were deſigned to ſo great glory, were alſo made partaker of the *Earneſt* of it, as this *Unctiq* 3 *on*

on by the Holy Spirit is called, 2 *Cor.* i. 22. After God had filled the Apoſtles and other Apoſtolical men with the Holy Ghoſt, who were ready to guide and direct all Chriſtian people while they lived: There were great numbers alſo in the Body of the Church, who received ſo many of its gifts *from the HOLY one* (that is, God, 2 *Cor.* i. 21.) that it enabled them to diſcern truth from falſhood; and diſcover all thoſe cheats and impoſtures which ſome went about to put upon them, under the name of Chriſtian Doctrine. A very great Doctor the Holy Ghoſt was, when they were anointed with it; for thereby they KNEW ALL THINGS: that is, their whole Religion, in which it made them ſo perfect, that thoſe pretenders to new Revelations could teach them nothing which they knew not already. For it taught them that *Jeſus* from whom it came, was the *Son of God*, and had revealed all God's will plainly and fully to them. So S. *John* tells them in the following verſes, 21, 22. *I have not written unto you, becauſe ye know not the truth; but becauſe ye know it, and that no lye is of the truth. Who is a lyar, but he that denieth that Jeſus is the Chriſt?* &c. That is, I do not ſpeak of this, becauſe you are ignorant of Chriſtianity, but be-

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cauſe you are well acquainted with it; and thereby able to judge when any body contradicts it, and to reject all thoſe as lyars, who deny *Jeſus* to be anointed by God, the Lord of all. I know you are well principled in this truth by the UNCTION which he hath given you from the Father: All that I deſire is (as he adds, *ver.* 24.) that you would ſuffer that Truth *which you have heard from the beginning*, to abide in you. And indeed it was very unreaſonable to ſtart from that which had ever been acknowledged ſince the Holy Ghoſt firſt deſcended on *Jeſus* himſelf; and which the ſame UNCTION ſtill teſtified, whenſoever the Apoſtles, who preached *Jeſus*, did but lay their hands on any bodies head, and pray to *Jeſus* that he would beſtow it on them. They could not be ſeduced if they did but attend, as he ſays, *ver.* 26, 27. to this *anointing which they had received, and which was yet among them.* There was no need of any other teacher, but this to inſtruct them. Which gave ſuch an evident demonſtration of the power and glory of the Lord *Jeſus*, and was ſo far from being a lye or deceiving them, that if they did but do it as it *taught* them, they muſt *needs abide in him.*

This you ſee was accounted and that juſtly, an infallible witneſs to him. He could never have ſent ſuch an UNCTION, nor would the Holy Ghoſt have ever come in his Name, if he had not been the King of Heaven. They that received this had an invincible proof of his glory and majeſty within themſelves. They could not doubt of it any more than they could of what they felt. Which proved likewiſe ſo convincing to others, that it made unbelievers fall down on their faces and worſhip God; *and report that God was in them of a truth*, 1 *Cor.* xiv. 25. For by this the Divine Majeſty did in a proper ſence *DWELL among Chriſtian people, and walk with them*, as it did among the ancient *Iſraelites*, 2 *Cor.* vi. 16. This was a glorious Divine Preſence in the Church, whereby God and our Saviour *made their ABODE with them*, xiv. *John* 23. and they became *the HABITATION of God* (or his Dwelling place) *through the Spirit*, ii. *Epheſ.* 22.

Which ſo conſtantly bare witneſs to him, that no man who had this Spirit could poſſibly deny him; but every one that ſpake by the Holy Ghoſt acknowledged

ed *Jeſus to be the* LORD, 1 *Cor.* xii. 3. And they were no ſmall number, who were made partakers of it. For S. *Peter* promiſes it at the very firſt deſcent of it, to all that would repent and be baptized in the name of *Jeſus*: at which word *three thouſand Souls were added to them*, ii. *Acts* 38, 41. And afterwards a vaſt company more, as you may read in the firſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*. Where ſome were endued with one power of the Holy Ghoſt, ſome with another (Chap. xii.) but *in every thing they were enriched by him, ſo that they came behind in* NO GIFT, Chap. i. 5, 7. Wherein our Lord far excelled *Moſes* who could not give his Spirit unto others, much leſs unto the *Gentiles*: whereas *Jeſus* ſent great abundance of his Spirit, as you ſee upon his Diſciples, and gave even to the *Gentiles the like gift as he did unto them*, xi. *Acts* 17. For as S. *Peter* was preaching to *Cornelius* and his friends, *the Holy Ghoſt fell on all them which heard the word*, to the great aſtoniſhment of the *Jewiſh* Chriſtians, who wondred *to hear them ſpeak with tongues, and magnifie God*, x. *Acts* 44, 45, 46. But they ſhould have conſidered that now he began to fulfil completely that prophecy of *Joel* (mentioned ii. *Acts* 17.) which promiſed

miſed that God would *pour out of his Spirit upon ALL fleſh.* Now the incloſures were firſt broken down, and that Divine Preſence which had hitherto been confined to one Nation, appeared in a moſt amazing luſtre to the reſt of the World. In ſo much that in a little time great multitudes of all nations, and kindred, and people, and tongues joyned their hearts and voices with the Heavenly Quire, ſaying, *Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hoſts: the whole Earth is full of his* GLORY. Thus *Eſaias* heard the Angels ſing, vi. 3. when *he beheld our Saviours glory and ſpake of him,* xii. *John* 39. And the Church of Chriſt from the beginning hath taken theſe words from their mouths, and made them their own; (iv. *Rev.* 8.) when they actually ſaw this GLORY OF THE LORD filling the Earth, with its moſt holy Preſence. For our Lord did not ceaſe to pour out more and more of his Spirit *on all fleſh,* even after the Apoſtles were dead: But as *Juſtin Martyr* tells the *Jew,* in his time (which was above an hundred years after this) ἐν παρ' ἡμῖν ἔστιν ἰδεῖν καὶ θηλείας*, &c. *One might have ſeen among Chriſtians both women and men, who had gifts from the Spirit of God.* And ſo one might in the days of *Origen** (who lived as many years after that)

* *Dial. cum Tryph.*

* *Lib. 1. contr. Celſ.*

that) who to convince *Celſus*, that it was no Fable which was reported of the deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt on our Saviour, affirms that ἔτι ἴχνη τοῦ ἁγίου ἐκείνου πνεύματος, &c. *There were ſtill remaining among them ſome footſteps of that Holy Spirit, which was ſeen in the form of a Dove. For they diſpoſſeſſed Devils, performed many cures, and foreſaw ſome things, according to the will and pleaſure of the* WORD, *concerning what was to come.* Nay, it were eaſie to ſhow that this Heavenly power deſcended ſtill much lower, and did not quite leave the World in theſe Ages: and that it did not work in ſome obſcure corners only, but in the moſt noted places in the World. For the ſame *Juſtin* ſays in his firſt Apology, that there were many healed by the Name of *Jeſus* Chriſt in the City of *Rome*; whom no other perſon could heal. So that look how many Souls there were full of the Holy Ghoſt, ſo many laſting *Witneſſes* there were to our Saviour of his power and glory in every place.

But intending hereafter to treat of all theſe gifts of the *Holy Ghoſt* alone by themſelves; I ſhall ſay no more of them now: having ſufficiently ſhown, how they were his *Teſtimony* to our Saviour.

It

It is poſſible, I confeſs, that there may be another thing included in the name of the HOLY GHOST; and that is the old Prophets, who received gifts from Heaven, whereby they ſometimes ſpake of the Meſſiah. So the HOLY GHOST is ſaid in the x. *Hebr.* 15. to be a witneſs of the perfection of our Saviours oblation; and for a proof of it the teſtimony of the Prophet *Jeremiah* is alledged, whoſe words are called the *witneſs of the Holy Ghoſt*. From whence I might take occaſion to ſhow that all the predictions of the Prophets do ſo exactly agree to *Jeſus*, and are ſo perfectly fulfilled in him, that we muſt needs grant him (if we receive this teſtimony of the *Holy Ghoſt*, and take them to have been inſpired thereby) to be the Son of God, the King of *Iſrael*, who they had long put that Nation in hope, ſhould come and reign over them. But this would be a work of too great length, and my intention is not to ſwell this Treatiſe into an huge Volume; which makes me only mention this notion, that you may conſider with your ſelves, as you have occaſion, what a reſemblance there is between *Jeſus* and that perſon whom the Prophets deſcribe unto us. For this will prove a great confirmation of your faith in him;

him; there being no doubt in the minds of the bittereſt enemies of our Saviour, but that thoſe *Holy men of God ſpake as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt.*

I have done now with theſe *witneſſes*, who ſpeak unto us from *Heaven*; and who *are one*, you ſee, in their teſtimony, as well as in their nature. They all agree in this, that *Jeſus is the Son of God.* There is not the leaſt difference between them; no doubtfulneſs in their teſtimony; no backwardneſs to give it; no obſcurity that ſhould make it difficult for us to underſtand it: But with one mouth (as we ſay) they unanimouſly, plainly, readily and clearly pronounce him to be ſuch a Divine perſon, that if we ſhould not hear him, and obey him, and depend upon him, I know not what we ſhall be able to ſay to ſo many Witneſſes, who will be ready to appear againſt us; whoſe teſtimony without any cauſe was ſlighted by us. Look how many voices have been heard from Heaven; how many witneſſes have openly appeared in his behalf: ſo many Divine reaſons you are to conceive your ſelf to be provided withall, for every word that *Jeſus* hath ſpoken. Which you are therefore to take for infallible, and to keep, as the

Apoſtle

Apoſtle ſpeaks (1 *Tim.* vi. 14.) *without ſpot and unrebukeable*, until his ſecond appearing. Liſten to thoſe words of grace which come out of his mouth. Abandon thoſe ſins which he requires you to forſake; and betake your ſelves to the practice of thoſe vertues which he ſo ſtrictly injoyns: For the FATHER, the WORD, and the HOLY GHOST declare that this is the Will of Heaven; And what is there in this world ſo conſiderable as to perſwade the contrary? If he be not the *Son of God*, if he do not prove it by undeniable arguments, then do as you liſt: But if he be, then you are bound to yield him the humbleſt ſubjection, and it will be a ſtrange ſtupidity to diſpute the matter with him. There can be no colour for your refuſal, ſhould you deny to be governed by him, who comes with ſuch Authority; that the *fulneſs of the Godhead*, as you have heard, *dwells in him bodily*.

O what an honour hath God Almighty hereby done our nature! how highly hath he advanced and dignified it, by this ſtrange and unexpected favour, which he hath conferred on it, in making it his Holy place! Conſider but what I have now ſaid, of the Teſtimony of the HOLY GHOST

GHOST to *Jeſus*; which was an illuſtrious token likewiſe of Gods wonderful love to us. Is it nothing that God ſhould be *manifeſted* in our fleſh; that he ſhould DWELL in us, and make his *abode* with us, and that we ſhould become the *habitation of God* through the Spirit? Look upon the Temple of old, and ſee how it glittered with Gold; how it was adorned with Cherubims and Seraphims, which were an emblem of the Angelical attendance in that place; but eſpecially how it ſhined with the *Glory of the Lord*, which appeared upon the mercy-ſeat: And then reflect how precious, how dear mankind are to Almighty God, into whoſe Nature this Glory is tranſlated; whom he hath beautified with greater excellencies, and made more ſplendid by a more intimate conjunction with it. Could any man then, after he had conſidered this, profane that Nature which God hath ſo ſanctified and ſeparated to himſelf? Could he find in his heart to proſtitute himſelf to any of thoſe baſe and filthy actions; that are below the dignity of humane nature nakedly conſidered, without ſuch a preſence of God in it? None can ſubmit ſure to the government of any fleſhly luſt, but he muſt firſt forget that he is a man, created

after

after the Image of God. And there is none can continue in this unworthy ſlavery, but he muſt lay aſide theſe thoughts alſo; that the WORD was made fleſh, and the Image of the inviſible God hath taken up his abode in our Nature. By this he hath called us to the greateſt ſanctity. He remembers us what excellent Creatures we are, and how Glorious he is deſirous to make us. And who is there that need deſpair of recovering himſelf by the grace of God, though he be ſunk never ſo much below himſelf; now that God is come on purpoſe to lift him up? He hath ſent Salvation to us, by one that is mighty to ſave. He hath revealed himſelf ſo graciouſly, and made ſuch diſcoveries of his Love and Power and Glory to all mankind, that they may confidently hope, if they will not caſt away all care of themſelves, to be reſtored to the image and likeneſs of God again.

But this Diſcourſe will come in more ſeaſonably, when we have joyned the ſtrength of the other *three Witneſſes* to theſe, and heard them all together, ſome from Heaven, others from Earth, proclaiming this in our ears; *Behold the Son of God: Jeſus* is your Lord; for he is the

Lord

Lord of all things. And we ſhall be the more ready for a ſurrender to him, when we ſee withall, how much we are beholden to God Almighty for his marvellous, inconceiveable love, in calling us ſo many ways, by ſo many arguments, to Repentance, Faith, Obedience and Everlaſting Salvation. That which I have now explained, deſerves to be remembred with the moſt affectionate acknowledgments, and we ſhall be better diſpoſed to hearken to the reſt, if we give him hearty thanks for what we underſtand already, and ſay;

A Prayer.

ADored be thy ineſtimable love, O thou Holy Spirit of Grace and Truth, the mighty Power of God; who haſt given ſuch gifts unto men, even to the rebellious alſo; that the LORD God might DWELL among them. *Bleſſed be thy Goodneſs, who didſt anoint our Lord with that oil of gladneſs, which hath run down to the meanneſt of his ſubjects. Great and wonderful was that Heavenly Power and Love, which appeared in ſuch viſible Ma-*

jeſty upon him, and filled him with the Holy Ghoſt; ſo that he went about doing good, and healing all that were oppreſſed of the Devil. *And much more marvellous was that Almighty Goodneſs, which promoted him to the throne of Glory in the Heavens,* that he might fill all things.

Praiſed be that aſtoniſhing Love, which firſt filled the Apoſtles minds with ſuch Heavenly light, and inflamed their wills with ſuch fervent heat, that they boldly preached the Goſpel to all the world. For ever magnified be that diffuſive Grace, which afterwards ſpread it ſelf in ſuch variety of gifts; wrought by one and the ſelf ſame Spirit, dividing to every man ſeverally, as he pleaſed. *Let the whole Church be giving continual thanks to thee, O Lord, for ſtretching forth thy hand in ſuch ſigns and wonders, to glorifie thy holy child* Jeſus; *for giving by the Spirit, to ſome a gift of wiſdom, to others a gift of healing, to others divers kind of tongues, to others prophecy; and for making ſome Apoſtles, ſome Prophets, ſome Evangeliſts, ſome Paſtors and Teachers; that every knee might bow to* Jeſus, *and every tongue confeſs that he is the Lord.*

I confeſs him with all my Soul; I honour him

him as my Dearest Lord. *I see thy Glory, O blessed* Jesus, *by the light of the Holy Ghost, which hath shone so oft from Heaven upon us. I see the Power thou hast at Gods right hand. I see the royal bounty of thy love. Now I know that thou knowest all things; and believe that thou art the faithful and the true, whose words shall never fail. O how much ought I and every Christian Soul, to rejoyce in the consolations of the Holy Ghost! which hath brought us new assurances from Heaven, that our Saviour lives, and reigns, and sits inthroned at the right hand of God, in incomparable majesty and glory. Inspire all our minds and hearts, O thou quickning Spirit, inspire them, O Lord and Giver of Life, with such ardent love and devotion towards him, that we may hope to reign with him, and then shall we rejoyce before-hand in this hope, with joy unspeakable and full of glory.*

Do not wholly absent thy self from us, O thou Guide and Comforter of our Souls (though we have not been so grateful to thee, nor followed thy directions and counsels as we ought) but still let thy gracious presence fill every part of the Christian Church. Though we have not that UNCTION *from above, which endued them heretofore with the gifts*

of tongues, and prophecy, and healing, and working of miracles: Yet pour down every where, much of the ſpirit of knowledge, and love, and devotion, and purity, and fortitude, and undaunted reſolution, and fervent Zeal; which may be ever glorifying the great God and our Saviour Chriſt Jeſus. *O thou who didſt open the eyes of the blind, and looſe the tongue of the dumb, enlighten our minds to ſee more of thoſe wonders, which may inflame our love, and incourage our hope; and open our lips, that our mouths may ſhew forth thy Praiſe. Still let there be hearts full of Faith in the bleſſed* Jeſus; *full of love to all mankind; full of ardent deſire to ſee his Kingdom come; full of wiſdom to open the myſteries of Salvation, to inſtruct men in the truth as it is in* Jeſus, *and to convince them mightily, and perſwade them to be obedient to it. That ſo by the ſame Heavenly power whereby the Faith of Chriſt was planted in the world, it may be graciouſly preſerved and promoted: and we may ſee it go forward and advance more and more, till every Nation now on Earth ſpeak in their own tongues the wonderful works of God.*

Let all the people praiſe thee, O God; Let all the people praiſe thee. Kindle in them ſuch devout affections, as may offer up continually

nually the ſacrifice of praiſe to thee. Let them praiſe thee with pure minds, and upright hearts, and unſpotted lives: and in perfect unity and godly love ſay every where,

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghoſt.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever ſhall be, world without end. *Amen.*

CHAP. V.

Concerning the Witneſſes *on* Earth, *and firſt of the* WATER.

HAVING given a brief account of the Teſtimony of the *firſt Three Witneſſes*, and finding much ſatisfaction in their perfect agreement; we have the greater encouragement to go to the *other Three*, who are alſo nearer to us than the former, and take that evidence which they are willing to afford us, for our further confirmation in this belief that *Jeſus is the Son of God.* Theſe three, you read in the eighth Verſe, are ſuch as bear witneſs on EARTH; whereby we may be the better acquainted with them, and they are the more undeniable, and furtheſt off from all queſtion or exception. For ſhould any be ſo bold as to diſpute that there might be no ſuch

voices from Heaven, ſuch apparitions of *Jeſus*, ſuch a deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt (as it is poſſible there may be ſuch conceited fools, who think themſelves wiſe by doubting of all things) yet that there were ſuch Witneſſes as the WATER, the BLOUD, and the SPIRIT, no man can be ſo obſtinate as to deny; they were ſo viſible to all ſorts of men whatſoever, that would but open their eyes to behold them.

In the *ſixth* verſe (of which the *eighth* is but a repetition) after the Apoſtle had ſaid, that the only Conqueror is he who believes *Jeſus* to be the Son of God; He adds, *This is he that came by WATER and BLOUD, even Jeſus Chriſt; not by Water only, but by Bloud alſo: and it is the SPIRIT that beareth witneſs*, &c. Where that phraſe [HE CAME] is to be diligently obſerved; which in the ſtile of the New Teſtament writers, ſignifies as much as that, He manifeſted himſelf to be the Meſſias or Chriſt; He made it appear that he was ſent of God. For thus the *Meſſias* is deſcribed in that queſtion which *John* Baptiſts Diſciples put to our Saviour, xi. *Matth.* 3. Art thou ὁ ἐρχόμενος, he that COMETH? that is, as *Grotius* well

expounds

expounds it, he that is propheſied of by *Jacob* our Father, under the phraſe of COMING, xlix. *Gen.* 10. And ſo He is ſaid to be *the light which COMING into the World enlightneth every man*, i. *John* 9. And *John* Baptiſt tells them, *He that COMETH after me, is preferred before me*, *ver.* 15. He was preferred to be their *King*, as the multitude cried out, ſaying, *Hoſanna to the Son of David, bleſſed be he that COMETH in the Name of the Lord*, xxi. *Matth.* 9. There is the true explication of the phraſe: He was *ſent* by a ſpecial commiſſion, ſuch as never any man had from God the Father; he appeared with his authority, and acted in his *name*. And as before he appeared in his Majeſty, he was called, *He that COMETH*; ſo afterwards the Apoſtle here calls him, *He that CAME*. The perſon, that is, whom God had promiſed from the beginning of the world to *ſend* into it; His SHILO, that is, *his Seed* (as *De Dieu* hath excellently expounded that word) the Seed of *Judah*, and the Son of God. Who in this fulneſs of time was to receive Commiſſion from God, and take upon him the Government of the World.

Now this perſon, ſays S. *John*, CAME (that

(that is, appeared to be ſent of God as his *Son,* his *only begotten*) *by Water and by Bloud.* Which is as much as to ſay, that it was manifeſt he *came* from God and not of himſelf by theſe two Witneſſes; to which the SPIRIT alſo adds its teſtimony, as it here follows [*and the SPIRIT bears witneſs*] which is ſuch a certain evidence, that they who rely on this, together with the former, can never be deceived by it; *becauſe the Spirit is the TRUTH.* As therefore God SENT him, ſo he CAME; and by theſe *three Witneſſes* proved that he was the Perſon, who, God promiſed, ſhould *come,* and was now *ſent*: whoſe teſtimony let us prepare our ſelves to hear, and examine diligently, that the faith of Chriſt may ſtill be rooted deeper in our hearts. And let us hear them, if you pleaſe, in that order wherein they ſtand in the *ſixth* Verſe (the place where we firſt meet with them) receiving firſt the teſtimony of the WATER, then of the BLOUD, and then of the SPIRIT.

Of the WATER.

And by WATER ſure can be meant nothing elſe but either *Purity* and innocence; or elſe *Baptiſm,* which we uſe as a ſign

ſign and a means of thoſe. We may conſider it in both ſences, and not be in any danger to wander from the ſcope of the Apoſtle, or do any wrong to the argument in hand, but receive moſt ſatisfactory evidence from both, that *Jeſus is the Son of God.*

I.

Firſt then let us take it in the notion of PURITY; which we uſe the help of *Water* to procure in bodily defilements. And therefore when the Prophet would expreſs the intention of God to purifie his people from moral filthineſs, he ſays he will *pour clean WATER upon them,* xxxvi. *Ezek.* 25. and in other places he calls upon them to *WASH themſelves*; when he would have them amend their ways, and lead new and holy lives. And when we ſpeak of the PURITY of *Jeſus,* wherewith he CAME, that is, demonſtrated himſelf to be the *Chriſt*; we muſt conſider that there is a double *Sanctity* or holineſs, for which He was eminent above all other perſons, which may both be denoted by WATER. The one is of his DOCTRINE wherewith Chriſt is ſaid to cleanſe his Church, for which he died, v. *Epheſ.* 26. *He gave himſelf*

himſelf for it, that he might ſanctifie it; having cleanſed it with the Waſhing of WATER *by the Word.* Where *the Word* (the preaching of the Goſpel) is either the explanation of *waſhing with Water*, or elſe denotes that Chriſtian Inſtruction which ſucceeds Baptiſm; to which, by our being *waſhed with Water* in the Name of Chriſt, we are bound to attend, as the great inſtrument of our purification. The other is holineſs of LIFE *and converſation*; which the ſame word WATER is uſed to expreſs in the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, x. 22. where the Apoſtle exhorts all thoſe who believed there was ſuch a royal High Prieſt as *Jeſus*, ſet over the family of God, to worſhip him with integrity of heart and ſincere affection to him; nothing doubting of the truth of his promiſes, and *having their hearts ſprinkled from an evil conſcience, and their bodies waſhed with pure* WATER. Now by a ſhort view of the perfect ſpotleſneſs of *Jeſus* in both theſe, in regard of his *Doctrine*, and in regard of his *Life*; we ſhall be able from thence ſtrongly to draw this concluſion, that he muſt needs be the *Son of God.*

I. Firſt for the PURITY of his DOCTRINE; it is ſuch, that it not only

only teaches no evil at all, but teaches all manner of Goodneſs; and ſeverely prohibits every vice. There is not the leaſt ſin to which the Holy *Jeſus* gives any countenance; no, he declares *the wrath of God from Heaven againſt all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of men*; whom he fully inſtructs likewiſe and encourages in every piece of true piety and vertue. So perfectly Holy is his *Word*, that if we did entertain it, the power of it would throughly waſh us from all uncleanneſs, and not leave the leaſt ſpeck of dirt in our hearts. For he intends by *that* (as the Apoſtle tells the *Epheſians* in the words following thoſe now named, *ver.* 27.) *to preſent to himſelf a glorious Church, not having ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing: but that it ſhould be holy and without blemiſh.* Whatſoever belongs either to our *knowledge* of God, or to our *Duty* in every reſpect, condition and relation, His Doctrine completely comprehends it.

He hath *firſt* of all ſo clearly revealed to us the ONE GOD Creator of Heaven and Earth, that none could do it more expreſly, or with greater reverence to his Majeſty. Whatſoever *Moſes* hath written againſt Idolatry, S. *John* here from

Jeſus

Jeſus (in the concluſion of his Epiſtle) hath ſummed it up in a few words, *Little children, keep your ſelves from* IDOLS. In this the *Jews* could not accuſe him, nor durſt let ſuch a word fall from their mouths, that he was a falſe Prophet, becauſe he endeavoured to draw their hearts after other Gods (which was the great mark of an Impoſtor, xiii. *Deut.*) No, he tells them that *this is Eternal Life, to know the only true God* (which words are ſpoken in oppoſition to all others) *and Jeſus Chriſt whom he had ſent.* But in this they might have ſeen that his deſign was far more noble and glorious than that of *Moſes*, who contented himſelf to preſerve that one Nation from the infection of Idolatry: whereas our Lord *Jeſus* plainly declared his intention was by his Apoſtles *to turn* all Nations *from Idols, to ſerve the living and true God.* There was never any man that appeared ſo great a lover of God as he was. Never any man that undertook to ſet on foot ſuch a deſign, for the advancement of the univerſal knowledge of him. All the Divine Attributes and Perfections alſo, He hath revealed ſo perſpicuouſly, that there never was ſuch a manifeſtation made of them to the World, as we ſee in Him. From whom we learn how Juſt,

how

how Good, how Wise, how Faithful, and how Powerful, *the Blessed and only Potentate is, who only hath immortality, whom no man hath seen or can see.*

And if we would know our *Duty*, either towards God in actions of *Piety*, or towards Men in actions of *Righteousness*, or towards our selves in actions of *sobriety*, we can learn it no where so easily, and completely, as if we go to him, and to those who have delivered it to us with great care and plainness from his mouth.

As for the Actions of PIETY, He teaches us *inwardly* to *Honour God*, v. *Joh.* 23. that is, to have an high esteem of him as our Lord, and as our chiefest Good: to *Love* him also, and that with all our heart, and all our Soul, and all our mind, and all our strength, xii. *Mark* 30. And to *Fear* him, seeing he can cast both Body and Soul into Hell; which makes him again and again bid us be sure to *Fear him*, xii. *Luke* 4, 5. To confide likewise and *Trust* in him, the living God, 1 *Tim.* iv. 10. To *Hope* in his mercy, 1 *Pet.* i. 21. And to *rejoyce* evermore, 1 *Thess.* v. 16.

And as we are thus to worship him in our

our Minds, ſo we are taught by his Religion *externally* to *adore* him and *fall down* before him, iv. *Matth.* 10. iv. *Rev.* 10. to *pray* to him both for our ſelves and others, 1 *Tim.* ii. 1, 8. and to be *inceſſant* in our Prayers (or to perform this holy duty very oft) xviii. *Luke* 1. 1 *Theſſ.* v. 17. and *to offer up by him the ſacrifice of Praiſe to God continually*, xiii. *Heb.* 15. *And in every thing to give thanks, which is the will of God concerning us in Chriſt Jeſus*, 1 *Theſſ.* v. 18. and eſpecially *to ſhew the Lords death*, that is, publiſh it with thanks and praiſe, *till he come*, to judge the World, 1 *Cor.* xi. 26.

The manner alſo of addreſſing our ſelves to God he hath taught us ſo fully, that nothing can be added to it. For he tells us, *The Father will be worſhipped in Spirit and in Truth*, iv. *John* 23. And that we muſt *lift up holy hands*, 1 *Tim.* ii. 8. And that when we pray we muſt *forgive others*, xi. *Mark* 25. and *ask in Faith*, xxi. *Matth.* 22. and avoid *vain babling*; and not affect *much ſpeaking*, nor deſire *to be ſeen of men*, and to joyn *Faſting* and *Alms*, with our Prayers and Devotions to God, *Matth.* vi. It is impoſſible to conceive any thing more Divine than theſe Inſtructions.

To

To which he adds as rare Precepts for Actions of RIGHTEOUSNESS: concerning which he hath given us such an absolutely perfect Rule, that it comprehends the measures of CHARITY too. No wit of man can think of any thing more holy than that, LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR AS THY SELF; or that, WHATSOEVER YE WOULD THAT MEN SHOULD DO TO YOU, DO YE EVEN SO TO THEM. This is a rule that reaches all men; and compendiously, yet completely, tells them how they should behave themselves towards each other. If a man were a Magistrate, or a Parent, or stood in any other superiority over his Neighbours, he would desire honour and obedience from them; that therefore, says our Saviour, let him give to those who are in Authority. If a man be our equal, we desire, if not his friendship, yet his fidelity in word and deed; that very thing let us be sure to render him and all others in the same equality with us. If we be placed below others, we desire the favour, the help, the relief, and counsel of our Betters; all these *Jesus* here teaches us to afford, with the same chearfulness that we would expect them in their case, to those who are

in want of our kind aſſiſtance.

Nay, he hath told us in *particular* what our duty is in theſe matters, by the mouths of his holy Apoſtles; that no man may think to excuſe himſelf by his ignorance and inability to apply a *general* Rule to every action of his life. I ſhall not name all the places where you may find ſuch words as theſe that follow, but only tell you, He would have us ſo far from doing evil to any man, that he requires us *owe him nothing, but only love.* And this debt we muſt be *always* paying, and think ourſelves debtors to *all men*; not only to treat them civilly, and give them good words, but *to love them in deed and in truth.* Which Love muſt teach us as to be *meek and gentle* towards all men; *to put away all bitterneſs and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil ſpeaking*; not to circumvent or *go beyond our Brother in any matter*; not *to lye to our neighbour*; nor *defame* him; much leſs *do him any hurt* in his body or goods: So to relieve his poverty; to help forward his joy; to comfort him in his ſorrow; to cover his defects; to make a fair interpretation of his actions; to let *our judgment* of him incline to the more favourable ſide; to mind what is *lovely* or grateful to others

and

and what things are of *good report*; to ſtudy things that *make for peace*; to compoſe and *reconcile* differences; to *beg pardon* of thoſe whom we have offended, and make them ſatisfaction; and if any have offended us, readily *to forgive* their fault; to *forbear revenge* when it is in our power to requite an injury; to *do good for evil*; to *bleſs thoſe that curſe us*; to overcome mens *hatred* with *benefits*; to *pray to God for thoſe who uſe us deſpitefully*; and to be *long-ſuffering*, when it is fit to puniſh any man for his crime. And as for thoſe who are truly pious, we are taught *to do them good above all other men*; to live with them *in unity* and godly love; to *ſympathize* with them in their ſeveral conditions; *rejoycing with thoſe that do rejoyce, and weeping with thoſe that weep.*

Nor hath he failed to tell us by his holy Apoſtles, with what kindneſs and indulgent affection *Husbands* ſhould treat their *Wives*; and how they again ſhould ſo affectionately obſerve their Husbands, that they may together make up a lively Image of that Deareſt Love, which is between Chriſt and his Church. And he hath inſtructed us all how to behave our ſelves towards *Magiſtrates, Biſhops, Presbyters,*

Maſters and *Parents*; whom he hath alſo taught how to bring up their *children*, to uſe their *ſervants*, to feed and govern their *flocks*, and to rule their *people* committed to their charge: ſo that no man can ſay he goes without that Leſſon, which is proper for his condition.

And then if we proceed to thoſe things which we call SOBRIETY, his Doctrine is ſo holy and pure, that it requires the greateſt Moderation in all things. It favours nothing that reliſhes of Covetouſneſs, or Ambition, or Voluptuouſneſs, or any other violent and inordinate paſſion whatſoever. But quite contrary, commands us *not to labour*, with too much eagerneſs and ſolicitude, *for the meat that periſhes*; to *lay up our treaſures in Heaven*; to be *humble and lowly*, like little children; to be *temperate in all things*; to be watchful and vigilant, leſt we be *overtaken with ſurfeiting and drunkenneſs or the cares of this life*; to be *chaſte and pure in heart*; to *mortifie our members that are on the Earth, fornication, uncleanneſs, inordinate affection, and evil concupiſcence*; to abſtain from *laſciviouſneſs, fooliſh talking, wanton and unſeemly jeſting*; to *cut off our right hand* and *pluck out our right eye*, if it prove an offence

to

to us; to take just measures of our selves, as well as others; to be *content* with our portion; to do those things which are *venerable*, grave and beseeming our condition and employment: which if it be not according to our desires, not to repine or be dejected at it; if it be, not to be transported with vain joy, much less with pride and contempt of our neighbours.

And after all these and such like incomparable Lessons, He teaches us to *suffer* any thing for well doing; to bear all worldly troubles valiantly and with a magnanimous heart; to despise reproaches; nay, to rejoyce when our names are cast out as evil, *for his name sake*; in *patience to possess our Souls*; and *not to be weary* in *well doing*, nor *faint in our minds*; but *to endure chastening*; to persevere and *suffer with long patience*; to *stand fast in the faith*; to *quit our selves like men*, and *to be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.*

To all which duties he urges us likewise, by the purest, the most spiritual, the noblest and most Divine Arguments. He does not press us with such low and poor motives as the hope of Riches (though he promise us things convenient)

or of Greatneſs, or of Fame and Glory; either while we live or when we are dead: but propounds his own example to us, and the example of all the Saints that are gone before us; and quickens us with the hope of Immortality when we depart this life; and aſſures us at preſent of the friendly protection of Angels, and of the joys of the Holy Ghoſt: which none of thoſe ſhall fail to receive, who are not inticed nor affrighted from their duty; but reſolutely hold out in their Chriſtian warfare, and overcome.

And if any man ſay, that ſeveral Philoſophers taught excellent things, and gave Rules of a vertuous life; and yet it does not prove the beſt of them to be ſo great, as theſe *Witneſſes* are brought to demonſtrate our Saviour was: The Anſwer is, that none of them delivered ſuch a complete Rule of holy living as our Lord hath done; none of them touched the heart with ſuch powerful reaſons and Divine motives; nor did any of them write without ſome mixture of folly; or themſelves exactly perform that which they taught others. Beſides, that none of them ever had the confidence to pretend to that quality, wherein our Saviour *came*; which

you

you ſhall ſee preſently is of great force to prove ſuch an Holy Perſon as he was, to be indeed what he pretended; *the Son of God.*

II. But firſt let us a little conſider the *ſecond* ſort of PURITY, that of the *Life*; in which our Lord *Jeſus* far out-ſtript all others. He did not only preach after that manner I have now related; but ſo he lived, and became a complete pattern of that which he taught. He was a LIVING LAW, as *Lactantius* calls him*, to all his Diſciples; whom he taught by Himſelf, and not merely by his Lectures of Piety. Other Teachers had conceived in their minds and painted in their Orations a vertue that was no where to be ſeen; for they were not able (as the ſame Author elſe-where ſpeaks) to confirm by preſent Examples, that which they aſſerted in their Doctrine. Their Auditors might ſtill ſay, that no body could live according to their preſcriptions, becauſe no body ever did. Behold, therefore our Saviour comes *to do*, and not only to preach, *the will of God.* And ſo holy, pure and free from all blame were all the *actions* of his life; that his greateſt Enemies could lay nothing to his charge, but

* *Lib. 4. Inſtit. C. 25*

only certain *words*: and thoſe, ſuch as contained moſt perfect truth, as he proved by his actions and many other ways.

He was the Lamb of God *without ſpot, and without blemiſh*, as S. *Peter* ſpeaks, 1 *Pet.* i. 19. He offered himſelf by the eternal Spirit *without ſpot* unto God, ix. *Hebr.* 14. His whole life was ſuch a fair example of that Piety, Humility, Charity, Gentleneſs, Forgiveneſs, Peaceableneſs, Patience, and all other vertues which he taught; that God reſtored him to life again, after they had crucified him and put him to death, becauſe there was no fault in him. He was frequent in Prayer to God; and ſometimes continued therein a whole night together. Upon all occaſions he gave him thanks. He loved his Glory and the Good of mankind, more than his life. He went about doing good. And he taught his Family to be as kind and tender-hearted as himſelf. He was meek and lowly in heart. When he was abuſed, He was dumb as a Lamb before the ſhearers, ſo opened he not his mouth. He was full of reſpect towards Magiſtrates and Governours; very ſweet and affable towards the pooreſt people; exceeding kind and compaſſionate towards his envenomed

venomed enemies; and perfectly contented in the lowest condition. When Foxes had holes, and Birds had nests, but He not where to lay his head; none could be found more chearful, thankful, and well pleased than he was. And as for his Fortitude, Courage, Constancy, Resignation, and all other suffering vertues; there never was any thing comparable to them. For he endured the Cross, and despised the shame, and contentedly took the contradiction of sinners, saying, *Father, not my will, but thy will be done.*

To all which you must add, that he was thus pure and undefiled, thus perfectly pious, just and good, in an Age that was levened with the doctrine of the *Pharisees*; who by their Traditions had made void the Law of God. Then he was complete in all manner of God-like qualities; when the strictest Sect of Religious people were utterly void even of common honesty. In those days he did all things that *God* required; when it was counted the greatest sanctity to do little but what *men* prescribed. When vertue was despised, when Faith and Judgment and the Love of God were hated, when there was nothing but the very dregs of *Abrahams* Piety remaining

ing among his Children; then *Jeſus* teſtified to them that their deeds were evil; then this light ſhined in that darkneſs; and this Son of God entred upon a more than *Herculean* labour, of cleanſing the Temple and the People, that were fuller of filth than the *Augæan* Stable.

And it is moreover to be conſidered, that though he oppoſed thoſe idle traditions of theirs, which evacuated the Laws of God; yet he neglected none of the Ceremonial ordinances of *Moſes*, but therein fulfilled all righteouſneſs. No body could accuſe him for the breach of any Commandment, that had a Divine ſtamp upon it. When they quarrelled with him for healing on the Sabbath day; He ſoon ſtopt their mouths by ſhowing them that they themſelves would not deny ſuch a charity to an Oxe or an Aſſe upon that day; if it were in danger of periſhing, or ſtood in need to be led away to watering. Nor was this ſo great a labour in him, as it was for them to pull a beaſt out of a pit; for he did but ſpeak a word, and the cure was done, without any further pains. They did but diſcover therefore, in theſe exceptions, their own rancorous malice and baſe hypocriſie; who ſcrupled ſuch chari-

charitable actions as these on the Sabbath day, but made no bones, as we say, at any time to undo even a poor widow; whose house their Conscience was wide enough to swallow. By his sharp but necessary reproof of such crimes, he incurred their hatred. Which could not dishearten him in his duty; but still he continued his free admonitions and reprehensions, though he knew it might cost him the loss of his life. The doing of Gods will was a great deal dearer to him than that. For this end he came into the world, as he told *Pilate*, that he might bear witness to the Truth. And therefore it was his meat, his great delight, to do the will of him that sent him, and to finish his work.

To conclude this; so free from all spot was the Holy *Jesus*, that the Devils malice could not tell what fault to charge upon him. But, as *Eusebius* * recites from the Heathen Oracles, was forced to acknowledge him to be εὐσεβέστατον καὶ ἀθάνατον (and as he says a little after) ὑρανίων ἀψίδων οἰκήτορα. That is, *a most Religious person, and made immortal after death; an inhabitant of the celestial Orbs.* *Porphyry* himself, a great factor for the old *Paganish* worship,

* *Lib.* 3. *demonstr. Evang.*

worſhip, but one that had taſted of Chriſtianity, and knew what was in it, durſt not (as he there notes) ſay any thing to his diſparagement: but from his own beloved Oracles, though he regarded not the holy Scriptures, was conſtrained to give the forementioned teſtimony of him. All that he was able to ſay in detraction from his honour, was this, that Chriſtians did fooliſhly to worſhip him: Though he granted him to be carried to Heaven, ὥσπερ οἱ εὐσεβεῖς, as Pious men are wont to be; and therefore adviſes his own Scholars not to blaſpheme (*i. e.* ſpeak evil of) *Jeſus*, but only to pity the ignorance of his *followers*.

It was very cautiouſly ſpoken, and moved no doubt the pity of Chriſtian people towards one that thought himſelf ſo knowing. For whatſoever he unskilfully determined, we are able to make it appear, that we do well to worſhip and honour him, even as we honour the Father of all: ſince his life is confeſſed by his Enemies to be perfectly pure and unſpotted; and his Doctrine teaches men nothing, but to do as he did. This concluſion we ſhall eaſily draw from the premiſes, if they be but diligently conſidered. And

1. Firſt

1. First of all, it seems to me incredible, that any one but he that was in the very bosom of God (that is, knew his mind most intimately, as I have said before;) should be able to declare his will so fully, and to give such a Divine Rule of holiness as *Jesus* hath done, even by the mouth of those who were skilled in nothing, but how to mend a Net, or catch Fish, or some such poor artifice, till he inspired them. All the words that he spake himself, both for the matter and manner of them, do not sound like the words of a Man, but of a God. *Never man spake like this man,* say they, that did not go to be instructed by him, but to apprehend him, vii. *John* 46. The report of others did not make him so great, as they found him, when they came to see and hear him themselves. Bad men are commonly more odious to us when we enter into conversation with them, than they were whilest we remained strangers, and had nothing to do with them. Nay, persons of known worth are sometimes more magnified by fame, than they appear when we approach nearer them. But *Jesus* was every where admired and glorified; and never more, than when men grew the most familiar

with

with him. None could deſpiſe, though they might hate him, unleſs it was when he thought good to ſay nothing, and to work no miracles; which made *Herod* and his men of war ſet him at naught. When he opened his mouth, they that did not believe on him, wondred, as you have heard, at the gracious words which thence proceeded.

For beſide that his Diſcourſes were incomparably beyond the common pitch of wiſe men, his delivery of them was altogether Divine; for he ſpake *with authority*, and was *a Prophet*, as the Diſciples going to *Emaus* relate to himſelf, *Mighty in deed and word before God, and all the people*, xxiv. 19. And ſuch were thoſe poor ignorant men, whom he choſe to be his Apoſtles. Who not only convinced gain-ſayers with the ſtrength of Divine Arguments, but alſo delivered Inſtructions for good Manners, with ſuch exactneſs and ſuch plainneſs of ſpeech; ſo familiarly, and ſo agreeably to the nobleſt inclinations of humane nature: that it is manifeſt they underſtood it better than the greateſt Philoſopher of them all. None of them ever deſcribed the ſeveral duties of mankind, and urged them with ſuch proper

proper arguments, in ſo few words, and yet ſo clearly and fully as theſe illiterate men did. Nor was there ever a ſet of men ſo *affectionately deſirous* of the good of others as theſe men were: who were *willing to impart unto them not only the Goſpel of God, but their own Souls alſo; becauſe they were dear unto them.* So S. *Paul* writes to the *Theſſalonians* (1 ii. 8.) every one of whom he *exhorted, and comforted, and charged, as a Father doth his children, ver.* 11. But he never uſed any *flattering words* towards them; nor *ſpake as pleaſing men, but God, who trieth the hearts*; nor carried on any deſign of *covetouſneſs*, or winning of *glory* to himſelf; nor would be, in the leaſt, *burdenſom* to them; but *was gentle among them, even as a nurſe cheriſheth her own children, ver.* 4, 5, 6, 7.

Show me the man that ever ſpoke with ſuch wiſdom and judgment, as they did; and with ſo much tenderneſs of heart. None but their Maſter ever preached or wrote with ſo Divine a Spirit: which *John* the Baptiſt deſcribes in ſuch words (with which I ſhall content my ſelf) as prove the excellence of his Perſon, from the excellence of his Doctrine, which he delivered unto men. They are in the

iii. *Joh.*

iii. *John* 31. where he ſays, *He that COMETH from above, is above all: He that is of the Earth, is Earthly, and ſpeaketh of the Earth: He that COMETH from Heaven, is above all.* That is, He who appears from Heaven with ſuch a Divine Authority, who delivers the mind of God in ſo rare a manner, that one may ſee he hath been with God, muſt needs excel all other perſons in dignity; *Moſes* and the Prophets, and me alſo, who am of an Earthly extraction, born like other men; and can ſpeak only like a man, poor and low things in compariſon with thoſe, which that Heavenly teacher delivers: who, I muſt needs again confeſs, is far ſuperiour to me, becauſe he is not a mere man, but comes from Heaven; and ſo is above all Prophets whatſoever, who had more of the Earth than of Heaven in them; that is, knew none of thoſe ſecret counſels of God concerning mans everlaſting bliſs, nor could direct us in ſo ſhort, but plain and ſure a way to it as he hath done. And then it follows, *ver.* 32, 33. *And what he hath ſeen and heard, that he teſtifieth,* &c. *He that hath received his teſtimony, hath ſet to his ſeal that God is true. For he whom God hath ſent, ſpeaketh the words of God.* That is, he ſpeaks ſuch things, that

a man may easily see he is the only begotten of the Father, who is in his bosom, and knows his very mind; having as certain an understanding of Heavenly things, as we have of what we *see* and *hear*. And therefore whosoever believes him, does no more but assent to God; whose words he speaks, by a particular commission he received from him to act in his Name.

It is very observable that just after the mention of these Witnesses, 1 *John* v. 10. S. *John* adds, that *He who believes not this record which God gives of his Son, hath made him a liar*: as on the other side *John* the Baptist here says, That *he who doth receive his testimony* (i. e. believes) *solemnly acknowledges God to be true*. From whence I conclude, that what is said in this Epistle hath a relation to that which is writ in the Gospel: which I take to be no more than this. That the Divineness of *Jesus* his Doctrine; the purity and Heavenly strain of his discourses; his preaching as if he had *heard and seen* the Father, and knew the state of things above; his speaking the Words of God (not as *anothers*, like the Prophets before him, but as his *own*) was a great testimony to him that he was sent of God, in that quality

that he pretended: So that they who received him did but rely upon the Truth of God, and give up their faith to him; who hereby, as well as other ways, perſwaded them that this was his Son.

2. But then that which I mainly inſiſt upon is this *ſecond* conſideration. That his pure, moſt holy *Doctrine* and *Life* was a great argument of his Divinity; becauſe this was part of his Doctrine, that he was the *Son of God.* For who can think that a perſon of his vertue, who taught men both by word and deed ſuch reverence to God and ſuch juſtice and charity to men, could be guilty of putting ſuch an open affront upon the one, and ſuch an abuſe upon the other, as to challenge this title and propound himſelf to be received in this quality, if he had not a juſt and undoubted right to it? He that came with ſo much ſanctity and holineſs, in all his other words, and all his other actions, one cannot but conclude was as holy and free from ſin in this as much as in any thing elſe; that he ſaid he was the *Chriſt*, and perſwaded the people to believe he was the *Son of the bleſſed.*

This is certain, He affirmed himſelf to be

be the Christ, the Son of God, *first* to his Disciples: And that both before his sufferings, xvi. *Matth.* 16, 17. ix. *Mark* 41. and also after his resurrection, xxiv. *Luke* 46. And then to others also, who were as yet none of them, as (1.) to the woman of *Samaria*, iv. *John* 26. Then (2.) to the blind man whose eyes he opened, ix. *John* 35, 36, 37. And *lastly*, he asserted it when he was brought before his Judges (as you have heard already) and this very matter was brought in question; yea, when they adjured him by the true God, and as he bare any respect to him, to tell them the very truth in this thing. Now who is there that would not infer from hence, that all the rest of his Doctrine being so opposite to all lying and every other vice, and his whole life giving such a proof of his perfect vertue, that they had nothing to ground a charge upon against him, but merely this profession of his own, wherein, if he had pleased, he might have been silent; it is not in the least credible that a person of his integrity should after so long speaking truth, now at the last be guilty of speaking a lye? And (2.) a lye of such a dangerous consequence as this, by which, if it were one, he and a world of Souls must be undone? Yea,

(3.) that he ſhould tell it ſo often to ſo many perſons? And that (4.) before the Magiſtrates, who are Gods in this world? And that (5.) when they were deſirous and very importunate to know the truth? Yea, (6.) before God himſelf, by whoſe name he was ſolemnly adjured to ſpeak nothing but the truth? How is it poſſible that ſuch a man as he ſhould be ſo void of all fear of God, as to offend him in ſo high a manner? There are none ſure whoſe underſtandings are ſound, or whoſe conſciences are not crackt, who can ſo much as fancy, much leſs perſwade themſelves to believe, that a perſon whoſe innocence was ſo great, that all the falſe witneſſes they could find, men who cared not for their own lives, could not be maſters of his; ſhould now, in ſuch a ſerious manner, when he was going out of the world, put ſuch an horrid cheat upon it, and with the loſs of his life too upon a ſhameful gibbet, as to ſay that he came from God, if he had no warrant for it. All ſober men muſt rather confidently believe that He who arrived, as I have often ſaid, at ſuch an height of blameleſs purity in all other points whatſoever, was as free from blame in this alſo; and ſaid nothing but the very Truth, when He ſo ſolemnly and

ſo

ſo frequently, before God and before men, in his life-time and at his death, profeſſed that he was *the Son of God.*

And if any man ſtill object, that his uprightneſs indeed was ſo great that without all doubt he would not invent ſuch a tale as this, and affirm what he did not believe; but yet he might be miſtaken and believe that which was not true: He may anſwer himſelf from his own conceſſions. For if he conſider how free our Saviour was from all ambitious deſires, how modeſtly he refuſed to be advanced, how void he was of covetouſneſs and all other worldly appetites, which may blind a mans reaſon and abuſe his underſtanding; and likewiſe how admirably he diſcourſes, how rational and convincing, how ſublime and heavenly all his Sermons are; He will ſoon be ſatisfied, that it is not credible a perſon of his wiſdom ſhould be ruled by mere fancy; or of his goodneſs, be carried into a vain dream by any ſenſual affections, which had no place in him.

This is the firſt acception of the word WATER, which you ſee clears our Lord from all imputation of fraud, and waſhes off all aſperſions that might be caſt upon

him of impoſture. For there is not the leaſt ſpot or blemiſh appears in the whole courſe of his *Life*, to render him ſuſpected of any guile, much leſs of ſo great a deceit as this, to feign himſelf the Son of God. Nay, his *Doctrine* is ſo Divine, ſo much beyond the ſtrain of the wiſeſt men that ever ſpake, that it demonſtrates he was as little obnoxious to be deluded himſelf, as he was inclined and diſpoſed to delude others.

II.

Let us now proceed to ſee what teſtimony may be drawn from this WATER in behalf of our Lord; if we take it in the other ſence, for BAPTISM, in which we make a profeſſion of PURITY. And there is a twofold BAPTISM by which our Lord may be ſaid to COME; that is, to appear a Perſon ſent of God, as his only begotten Son: The firſt is *the Baptiſm of John*; the ſecond is his *own* Baptiſm.

I. As for the *Baptiſm of John*, it may be ſaid that our Saviour CAME *by* or *with* this WATER; both becauſe *John* when he baptized men with Water, preached that He was *coming*, iii. *Matth.* 11.

i. *John*

i. *John* 30. and becauſe He brought this Baptiſm along with him, or rather ſent it a little before him, as a teſtimony of him, which would *prepare his way*, and diſpoſe their hearts to receive him as the *Chriſt of God.* For it is manifeſt that it was intended as a proof of this, from thoſe words of our Saviour himſelf, by which he ſtopt the mouths of the *Phariſees*, and took away all matter of cavil from them, when he aſſerted his ſupreme Authority both over them and over their Temple, xxi. *Matth.* 23, 24, 25, 26. There you read that our Saviour having come in Triumph to *Jeruſalem* (*ver.* 8, 9.) and there received *Hoſanna*'s from old and young, and been ſaluted as *the Son of David*, that is, their KING (who the Prophet had ſaid, *ver.* 5. ſhould *come* unto them, *meek and ſitting upon the Foal of an Aſſe*,) and he having caſt the buyers and ſellers out of the Temple (*ver.* 12.) and prohibited them to carry ſo much as a veſſel through it (as S. *Mark* tells us, xi. 16.) and being now teaching the people there, the Chief Prieſts and the Elders came to him, and examined him *by what Authority* he did theſe things, and *who gave* him this Authority. That is, they bid him produce his Commiſſion, if he had any, and ſhow

them from whom he was SENT and CAME to take this Office, not only of a Teacher, but of a Reformer, and that of the Temple it ſelf: and likewiſe who warranted him to ride in ſuch pomp to *Jeruſalem*, as the *Son of David*, the Lord of that Country.

The Anſwer of our Saviour to this queſtion is, that they might ſoon be reſolved, if they would but ſatisfie him in another queſtion, concerning another perſon, who was *come* alſo in an unuſual manner among them: And that was, whether *John* had a Commiſſion from God to baptize, or came of himſelf, by the allowance of men only. Anſwer me but this queſtion, ſays he, and I will tell you by what authority I do theſe things. Conſider of it, and tell me what you think; *whence was John's Baptiſm? from Heaven, or of Men?* That is, who gave him his power to preach, to reprove, to call men to repentance, to receive confeſſion of ſins, and to do all other things belonging to his Miniſtry, which Baptiſm accompanied, and conſtantly waited upon? Did God bid him go? or was it from a motion of his own?

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While they consulted for an Answer to this question of our Saviours, they clearly saw their *own* answered. And they were not so dull, but that they could easily discern our Lord would irrefragably prove his Divine Authority, and make them confess he was the *Messias*; unless they would adventure to say that, which all the Country would decry not only as a falsity, but an egregious calumny. For if they had affirmed that *John* entred upon the Office of Baptizing and Teaching the people out of his own private will and inclination, or by commission from some men; in this opinion they knew they should be singular, because *all the people held him to be a Prophet*. That is, it was the sence of the whole Nation then (and so it was afterward, as appears by *Josephus*) that the Baptist was a Divine Man, inspired by God, and sent of him to do what he did: which would have made them the publick scorn and hatred, if without a reason able to confute all the Country, they should have denied it. But then if they should grant this and say, He was sent of God (which was the only thing they could say with safety, if they would affirm either) they saw themselves in as

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ill or worſe a caſe another way: being as much afraid of what *Jeſus* would ſay, if this were confeſſed, as they were of what the people would ſay, if it were contradicted. For as the people would have cried ſhame on them, if they had diſparaged *John*'s miniſtry, ſo if they allowed it to be from Heaven, then they knew *Jeſus* would unanſwerably prove his Commiſſion to be from Heaven too: and tell them that *John*, whom they took for a Divine Man, ſhould acquaint them with his authority, and from whom he had it; for he bare witneſs, in expreſs words, that he was the Chriſt, the Son of God. They thought it a ſafer courſe therefore to leave this queſtion undetermined, and to ſay *they could not tell* whence his Baptiſm was, than by reſolving it either way, to give with their own mouths ſo great an advantage to him, whom they queſtioned and oppoſed.

But by ſaying nothing, they plainly confeſſed, that if they had gone on to diſpute with him, He would have had the better of them: and have made it appear from *John* Baptiſts teſtimony, that He had an authority far greater than that which they muſt have acknowledged in him.

him. For though our Saviour thought good, for brevity-sake, to propound this argument to them by way of question, and so let them reason it out within themselves; yet it was as forcible, they plainly felt, as if he had pleaded with them in this manner. My Authority, which you call in question, is every evident. I have it from Heaven, and not from Men; as I prove by this argument. If the Baptism of *John* be from Heaven, then from thence I come; now you cannot deny, if you will speak out, that his Baptism is from thence; and therefore I make the conclusion, that my Authority is Divine. The consequence was as clear as the Sun, that if *John* was sent by God, then so was *Jesus* in that quality wherein he appeared; because *John* (as you shall see) gave this testimony to him, which could not be questioned after they had granted him to be a Prophet. The only thing that could be denied in this Argument was, that *John*'s Baptism was from Heaven; or that God authorized him to say and do what he did. But this they durst not oppose, because then to rid themselves of one Enemy, they should bring the whole Nation, as we say, about their ears: who did not take *John* for a counterfeit, but thought,

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that he was a Prophet INDEED, xi. *Mark* 32. Nay, they themſelves never adventured to call *John* before their Council; much leſs adviſed how they might put him to death, as they did our Saviour. But on the contrary, *many of the Phariſees and the Sadducees came to his Baptiſm,* iii. *Matth.* 7. They were as inclinable to reverence him as the people. For God who had ſpoken heretofore to that Nation ſo long by *Prophets,* whom they thought themſelves bound to believe, had plainly manifeſted him to be one. Nay, he was not a common Prophet, but one of an extraordinary rank: *The Prophet of the Higheſt,* his Father calls him; and *more than a Prophet* in the language of our Saviour, as you ſhall hear preſently.

What ſhould they do then? which way ſhould they turn themſelves, now that they durſt not deny the Propoſition, upon which this conſequence evidently depended, that *Jeſus* was the *Chriſt?* Their only refuge was ſilence: For though thereby they acknowledged him too hard for them, and ſuffered his Divine authority to ſtand ſupported by this unanſwered Argument; yet they had rather part ſo, and ſhamefully break off the diſputation which they themſelves

themſelves had begun, than let him go away with their expreſs confeſſion and teſtimony, that, if the Prophet of the Higheſt might be believed, he was *their Chriſt.* It was no diſadvantage to our Saviour, but to their own cauſe, that they anſwered, *they could not tell* whence *John*'s Baptiſm was: For hereby it appeared He had ſo much to ſay for himſelf, that if they would ſay any thing in this matter, and not obſtinately hold their peace, they muſt ſay as He did, that He was the *Son of God.* For *John* Baptiſt, whoſe Heavenly authority they durſt not deny, though they would not confeſs it, received all men into this belief when they came to him, that there was one COMING *after him,* who ſhould gather Diſciples as he did, and that he was *the Chriſt.* This he told them was the very end of his Preaching and Baptizing, *to prepare the way of the Lord*; to make them fit and ready to entertain the next Prophet that ſhould appear, as greater than him, even as *the Son of God.* And therefore when *Jeſus* did openly appear and come to his Baptiſm, and *John* ſaw the Spirit deſcend and remain on *him,* then he told them in plain terms that *this* was the perſon whoſe way he came to prepare, and that they muſt receive

ceive *him* as the *Son of God*, and *the Lamb of God that taketh away the ſins of the world*, i. *John* 29, 30, 34. And that which he ſaid at this time, there is no doubt he declared at all times, when the people came to be baptized. For thus the *Jews* deſcribe *Jeſus* when they diſputed with ſome of *John*'s Scholars about his Baptiſm, iii. *Joh.* 25. HE TO WHOM THOU BAREST WITNESS, *behold, the ſame baptizeth*, &c. *ver.* 26. Thence he is frequently called one of his WITNESSES, and ſaid to come for this end, that he might be a WITNESS to him, *that ALL men through him might believe*; that is, might be perſwaded that *Jeſus* was the *WORD of God*, by this teſtimony of *John*, i. *John* 6, 7, 8. And our Saviour afterwards appeals to this Teſtimony of his, and bids the *Jews* conſider it, v. *John* 32, 33. For you know, ſays he, that he bare WITNESS to me, when ye ſent to him: *And I know that the WITNESS which he WITNESSETH of me is true.*

And great reaſon there was that they ſhould conſider it, and be convinced by it. For *John was a burning and a ſhining light* (as it there follows, *ver.* 35.) and they *themſelves were willing for a ſeaſon to rejoyce*

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in his light. If that fit was over, and now they were leſs delighted in him, it was merely becauſe he teſtified of *Jeſus*. There was nothing elſe to damp their affection; for otherways they could not but confeſs him to be an illuſtrious perſon. Who ſhined with the greater ſplendour, becauſe He was miraculouſly conceived in his Mothers old Age; and his Birth was predicted by an Angel; and his Father ſtruck dumb becauſe he believed not his Word; and this Angel appeared in the very Temple, at the Altar of Incenſe, and therefore was not like to be a deluſion; And his Father was indued with the Spirit of Prophecy, and his tongue unlooſed when this Child came to be Circumciſed; Then He ſpake concerning his quality, by the inſpiration of the Holy Ghoſt; and *John* appeared to be prophetically endowed from a child; God alſo took care of his education in the Wilderneſs, where he was trained up to a reſemblance of *Elias*; ſo that his life and manners tranſcended all in that Age; and his Spirit and Doctrine was ſo powerful and convincing, that it was hard for them to ſay who he was; the people admiring his ſanctity and preaching, held him for a Prophet; and ſome of the Prieſts and

Levites

Levites having ſuch an eſteem of him, that it was a queſtion among them, whether he was not the CHRIST.

They were ſent, you know, from *Jeruſalem* to enquire about it, i. *John* 19, 20, &c. and yet this Perſon, who ſhined with ſuch a luſtre, whom *Jeſus* himſelf calls the greateſt that had been born of women, of whom he was baptized; declares to theſe perſons who came to ask who he was, that he was not worthy ſo much as to carry the Shooes of him that was *coming* after him, *ver.* 27. and that his Doctrine, as you have heard (iii. 31.) was of *the Earth,* flat and low in compariſon with the words that *Jeſus* ſhould ſpeak; who he told them plainly was the Chriſt, the Son of God: but as for himſelf, *he confeſſed, and denied not; but confeſſed* (that is, repeated it more than once, and affirmed conſtantly) *I am not the Chriſt.*

What reaſon was there then, why both they that heard his teſtimony of *Jeſus,* and they that ſent theſe meſſengers to make enquiry, ſhould not believe him, ſince all this was ſo known a truth? His Father *Zacharias* was a Prieſt, whom they could not

not but reverence more than to imagine he ſtudied to deceive, eſpecially ſince he was noted for a righteous man, *walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameleſs.* And *John* himſelf was a *Nazarite*, one whoſe head was never troubled with the fumes of Wine or of ſtrong drink: (i. *Luke* 15.) and bred up likewiſe in the *Deſarts* or Wilderneſs of *Judea* (i. *Luke* 80.) after a plain and ſimple faſhion; where he was like to learn no craft or guile. If any body ſhould take the confidence to fancy that there might be a compact between *Jeſus* and him, to cry up and ſpeak great things of one another: He is confuted by the plain ſtory of both their lives. I have told you how far *Jeſus* was from ſeeking his own glory; and *John* Baptiſt was a man of ſuch confeſſed ſanctity and ſevere vertue, that none then could ſuſpect him of ſuch a guilt. Beſides that it is manifeſt they never had ſeen one another, at leaſt *John* had no knowledge of our Saviour, until He came to be baptized of him: when he immediately proclaimed him to be that perſon whom he had magnified ſo much, and told them ſhould be preferred above himſelf, before he had any ſuch acquaintance with him. And it is not unfit to be remembred, that

even before he was born, *John* Baptiſt leaped in his Mothers womb, when the bleſſed Virgin came to viſit her; as if he had then begun to confeſs him to be the LORD (as his Mother calls him, i. *Luke* 41, 43.) and to rejoyce to be a WITNESS unto ſo great a perſon.

For a concluſion of this, let the place be noted where *Jeſus* came to be baptized of *John*; and where he gave ſo ample a teſtimony to him: For from thence we ſhall draw ſomething, which will help to ſettle this belief in us, that *Jeſus* is the Son of God. It was at BETHABARA *beyond Jordan*, as S. *John* has recorded, i. *John* 28. There the Prieſts and Levites, who were deputed by the *Sanhedrim*, or great Council at *Jeruſalem* to go and examine him, received their Anſwer from him again and again, that he was not the CHRIST: For there he was baptizing; and there *Jeſus* came to receive his baptiſm; for as he was ſpeaking thoſe words which you read *ver.* 27. and ſaying he was *not worthy to looſe the latchet of his Shooes*; *Jeſus came from Galilee* (as S. *Matthew* writes, iii. 13.) *to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.* Now this Name BETHABARA ſignifies the *place of paſ-*

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sage, or *going over* (בית *Beth* in their language being an *house* or *place*, and עברה *Abara*, a *passing over* from one place unto another) and therefore in all likelihood hereabouts the children of *Israel* went over this River *Jordan*, when they entred upon the land of *Canaan*. This was the place of their passage, when God brought them out of the Wilderness to their desired possession; and so had the name of *Bethabara* affixed to it, in memory of so great a blessing.

Now *Jesus* being baptized at that very place where *Joshua* or *Jesus* (as he is called iv. *Hebr.* 8.) conducted the children of *Israel* over that River unto their rest; and receiving there such a testimony both from God the Father, and likewise from *John* the Prophet of the highest: It was a notable sign and token (joyned with those two) that this person called *Jesus* also was He that should lead them into the Heavenly rest, and be the *Captain of their salvation*. And the *Holy Ghost* descending also in this very place upon him; here he was anointed to be the Guide, the Leader and Conductor of God's people: that is (as we render the word ἀρχηγὸς, v. *Acts* 31.) *a* PRINCE *and a Saviour*, who

ſhould put them in poſſeſſion of the greateſt bleſſings. As *Moſes laid his hands* on *Joſhua* near this place (which we may reaſonably conjecture from xxxiv. *Deut.* 9.) and made him the Ruler and Governour of that Nation: ſo here did God himſelf *give all things into the hands of Jeſus*, by the Holy Ghoſt coming down upon his head, appointing, conſtituting and ordaining him to be the Royal Prophet who ſhould bring all the world to his obedience.

And it is obſervable, that to this place our Saviour a great while after returned again, and there made his reſidence, when the *Phariſees* ſought to kill him, x. *John* 40. I cannot but think that this Evangeliſt would have us learn ſomething from his ſo particular remembrance of this place, both at our Saviours baptiſm, and at his return again into the Country beyond *Jordan*. For it is not their manner to mention ſuch circumſtances in ſo ſhort a Hiſtory as this is, without ſome conſiderable reaſon. Now as we have gueſſed at the cauſe of his being baptized and receiving the teſtimony of *John* at *Bethabara*; ſo it is likely the reaſon why our Saviour went hither again and here *abode* was, that he might call to the peoples

peoples mind what had been done here formerly; the Teſtimony which *John* received from God concerning him, and the Teſtimony which thereupon *John* gave to them of him, at this remarkable place. For he knew *thoſe things which were done at Bethabara,* had a great force in them to work a much better diſpoſition in the people, than was in the murderous hearts of thoſe at *Jeruſalem,* and to move them to become his Diſciples. According to which ſuppoſition you read in the very next words (x. *John* 41,42.) that many reſorting to him, began to diſcourſe among themſelves concerning *John,* and of what he had ſpoken concerning our Saviour (for which we can find no occaſion but the place, and perhaps our Saviours putting them in mind what had been ſaid and done here) and that *many believed on him* THERE. The word *there* is to be remarked; for it tells us that theſe Diſciples were won to *Jeſus* at that place, where *John at firſt baptized.* They remembred, it is probable, what he had ſaid; how he told them, that he ſaw the Holy Ghoſt here deſcend and remain upon him, and that this was he whom he had ſpoken of before who was greater than himſelf, and that he *ſaw and bare record*

that this is the Son of God. And they likewiſe now beheld ſome *miracles* wrought by our Saviour (whereas *John* wrought none) which proved *John*'s words to be *true which he ſpake of him*, that he ſhould be *preferred before him*: be the true *Joſhua* whom they muſt all follow, the Meſſiah, the KING of *Iſrael*, to whoſe conduct they muſt truſt, if they meant to enter into reſt.

I have done with the *firſt* BAPTISM, that of *John*; which if you conſider throughly, the Perſon from whom *Jeſus* received it, the place where he went into the water, the teſtimony that was here given him, both by the *Father*, by the *Holy Ghoſt*, and by *John*; you will eaſily grant it might well be affirmed in reſpect to all theſe, that *he came by WATER*, and that this was one of his WITNESSES.

II. It is time now to come to the *ſecond* particular, and take into conſideration awhile his OWN BAPTISM which he adminiſtred: For that is not without ſome proof, that he was the CHRIST. Indeed *Jeſus* himſelf baptized not, but his Diſciples, as you read, iv. *John* 2. But yet

yet becauſe whatſoever a Servant doth by the authority of his Maſter, it is reputed the Maſters Act, and he himſelf is ſaid to do it; therefore *Jeſus* alſo is ſaid to baptize in the ſame Evangeliſt, iii. 26. iv. 1. Now this was an argument to the *Jews* that he was the Meſſiah.

1. Firſt, becauſe all expected that the Meſſiah or CHRIST ſhould come with *Baptiſm*, and thereby *renew the world*, as the *Hebrew* Doctors ſometime ſpeak. It began they ſay in the time of *Moſes*, when he brought them to receive the Law from God, and entred them by this Ceremony of waſhing into a new Religion, xix. *Exod.* 10, 14. By which they tell us, *Proſelytes* were received into their communion in ſucceeding times; when they paſſed from the ſtate of *Gentiliſm*, and were regenerated to worſhip God with the *Iſraelites*. And therefore when CHRIST came, and with him a *new world* (for there is nothing more common in their Books than to call his days, The WORLD TO COME) they concluded he ſhould begin it with *Baptiſm*, as *Moſes* did that frame of things which he erected.

This is certain, it was one of their marks of him, that in his days there ſhould be an univerſal Baptiſm and cleanſing of the people. Which they gather from xiii. *Zach.* 1. where we read of a *FOUNTAIN opened for ſin and for uncleanneſs*: and from ſeveral places in the Prophet *Iſaiah*, where he ſpeaks of the *Waters in the wilderneſs* (in which S. *Mark* tells us *John baptized*, i. 4.) and from the xxxvi. *Ezek.* 25. where he ſays, *I will ſprinkle Water upon you*, &c. *a new heart alſo will I give you*: which is applied by the Apoſtles to the days of Chriſt, who began his new Kingdom with *waſhing with Water* or Baptiſm in his name. And therefore when *John* the Baptiſt came with this Water, they ſent, as I noted before, to know of him who he was, thinking he might be *the Chriſt*. For which there appears no reaſon (for he did not work ſo much as one miracle) but that *all Judea, and all the region about Jordan went out to him, and were BAPTIZED of him in Jordan confeſſing their ſins*, iii. *Matth.* 5, 6. And therefore when He told them that he was not the CHRIST, nor *Elias*, nor that *other Prophet*, whom they expected to accompany him, they ask him then, i. *John* 25. *Why BAPTIZEST thou*, if thou art none

none of these? They thought it was not in the power of any man to institute and introduce this new Ceremony, unless he was either *the CHRIST* or his *Forerunner*, or some other *Prophet* (*Jeremiah* it is like) who they fansied should rise from the dead and come along with him. A *new* Ceremony I call it, because though we should grant that *Baptism* was in use among them (as much hath been said by Mr. *Selden* * among others to prove it) yet thereby they only received Proselytes and their children from other Countries. But it was not the manner to baptize *Jews*, such as were grown and adult; much less did any of the Masters in *Israel* gather Disciples after this fashion; and therefore the *Sanhedrim* might well send to enquire who this was, that took upon him to call all the Country to repent, and sanctifie themselves; and also like a Prophet had particular scholars ministring unto him.

* *Lib. de Jure Nat. & L. de Succession.*

The most learned of the *Jews* indeed had but confused notions of things to come, and the *Priests* and *Levites* you see here by their questions, did not certainly know whether Baptizing with such an authority, was a sign that a man was the Christ or not: yet they generally inclined

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to believe that it was a note of him, as may be gathered, I think, from iii. *Luke* 15. where you read that *the people were in expectation* (knew not what to think, but waited that *John* would declare *the Chriſt* to them) *and ALL MEN muſed in their hearts of John*, that is, *debated* and *reaſoned* within themſelves (as it is in the Margin) whether *John* would at laſt declare himſelf to be *the Chriſt* or not. And another Argument there is to prove that they lookt upon *Baptiſm* as a mark of the *Meſſiah*; for as ſoon as our Saviour began to make this his buſineſs, and to authorize his Diſciples to baptize, then they were more *in ſuſpenſe* (as that word *expectation* in S. *Luke* now mentioned may be rendred) than ever: And knew not what to imagine, when they ſaw two great men doing one and the ſame thing, and thereby drawing the people after them. But after they had debated the matter better, it ſeems they began to leave their opinion of *John*'s being the Meſſiah, and to look rather upon *Jeſus* as the perſon; at leaſt to have ſome thoughts that it might be ſo.

For we find in iii. *John* 25. that there aroſe a controverſie between ſome of *John*'s Diſciples and ſome *Jews* who were not his Diſciples,

Disciples, *about purifying or cleansing*: by which may be understood *Baptism*, which was the sign and the instrument of it. And the dispute (as far as the following discourse directs our conjectures) was this, Whether their Master *John*'s Baptism, or that of *Jesus* was the best, and which of them a *Jew* should receive? For they saw them both baptise, *Jesus in Judea*, *ver.* 22. and *John*, *in Enon near to Salim*, *ver.* 23. To which of these places therefore they should resort seems to be the question. If *John*'s baptism was from Heaven, why should it be laid aside, or why should another come and take his work out of his hand? Was *Jesus* now sent with a greater authority, so that they must leave *John*, and go to him? To this his Disciples being able to give no satisfaction, they go to the Master himself for a resolution, and tell him, *Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan to whom thou bearest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him.* As much as to say, we are much perplexed, being in doubt which of you two to receive for our Master. For *Jesus* who was *baptized of thee at Bethabara* (a note they imagined of his inferiority to *John*) and yet had a testimony from thy self that he was sent of God too; does not only now

take

take upon him thy office, and thereby leſſen and extenuate thy authority, but quite eclipſes and obſcures thee, baptizing far more than thou doſt. Which ſhows that they began to conceive *John* was not the man they had taken him for; but that *Jeſus* rather ſhould enjoy that name which they had been apt hitherto to beſtow upon him: and their Argument was, becauſe *Jeſus* baptized more Diſciples than the other did.

To this *John* anſwers in the next words, *ver.* 27. *A man can receive* (or take unto himſelf) *nothing, except it be given him from Heaven.* That is, let not this trouble you, that *Jeſus* Baptizes, and all come to him; it is no more than I told you, that I was no body in compariſon with him. For no man can honeſtly aſſume more authority to himſelf than his Commiſſion gives him. And for that reaſon I could not do ſo much as *Jeſus* does, becauſe I have not received ſo much, nor can pretend ſo large a power from God, who alone can give it. And then he adds, that it is ſtrange they ſhould forget what he had told them in expreſs words, *ver.* 28. *Ye your ſelves bear me witneſs, that I ſaid, I AM NOT THE CHRIST, but that I*

am

am sent before him. That is, it is a wonder you raise this dispute, when I never gave you any occasion to fancy me to be as great as he; but told you plainly, as you your selves may remember, that I was not your KING anointed by God to rule over you; all the honour that I had being no more than this, to be ordered to come and prepare his way for him. I never intended that my washing you with Water, or gathering Disciples, should be a mark that I was the CHRIST: Alas! I only baptized you with the water of repentance, that you might be disposed to believe on him, who I told you was *coming*. To whom you would do well, now that he is come, to go and be baptized of him. For he brings a nobler baptism than that of mine, being as much above me as the Bridegroom at a wedding is above him who only waits upon him, and prepares things belonging to the marriage. That's the sence of the 30. *verse*. I never intended to set up my self as the Principal person in this business, that we are come about. For I know very well, that *he who hath the bride, is the bridegroom*, that is, he is the Head of the Church or people of God, to whom God hath designed that high honour. And that is *Jesus*, not I, who am

only

only *his Friend,* ſent before to make things ready for him. It is a great honour for me to be one of his Diſciples, and to receive his inſtructions. And I am glad with all my heart that I live to hear him preach. It is an exceeding great pleaſure to me, all the joy I can deſire, to hear him, the Bridegroom ſpeaking to his Bride the Church, and telling her himſelf what he intends to do for her, and what he would have her to do. Queſtion no more therefore to whom you ſhould go for purifying from your ſins, nor think it ſtrange that he Baptizes more than I. For *He muſt increaſe, but I muſt decreaſe, ver.* 30. There remains now nothing for me to do; but I muſt be obſcure, as *Theophylact* gloſſes, like the day-Star when the Sun ariſes. All muſt become his Diſciples, even they who now are mine, and I my ſelf too, as in truth I am. For he ſays, the Friend of the Bridegroom, that is, himſelf, *ſtandeth* (which was the poſture of a Scholar before his Maſter) *and heareth him, rejoycing greatly becauſe of his voice,* that is, becauſe he is come to teach, who could do it better than himſelf. For there is as much difference, he preſently adds in the next words, *ver.* 31. (which I have explained before) between their two doctrines, as

there

there is between the Heaven and the Earth. And therefore they must needs be inexcusable who did not *receive his testimony* (*ver.* 32.) and become his Disciples. Who came with such authority from God (*ver.* 33.) and had not the Spirit by measure (*ver.* 34.) but the power to reveal the whole will of God, and do all his pleasure (*ver.* 35.) For, as he concludes, *everlasting life* is the portion of him who believeth on *Jesus*: but if a man believe not, *he shall never see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

Thus you see *John* himself directs them again unto *Jesus*, and bids them go to his Baptism, become his Disciples, and no longer doubt whether he was the Christ or not. For as he did not pretend to an equality with *Jesus*, so they should see his fame continually decline and grow less, by the growth of the Glory of *Jesus*, who should shine alone by himself, and quite darken him. So *Gregory* * the Great expounds those words now mentioned (*ver.* 30.) *He must increase, and I must decrease*; the sence of which he seems to have hit better than any that I have seen, when he says: *In what was John diminished, and our Saviour advanced but in this: that the people seeing*

* *Hom.* 20. *in Evang.*

ſeeing the abſtinence of John, and his retirement from the ſociety of the world, imagined him to be the Chriſt; whereas our Saviour, whom they beheld eating with Publicans, and keeping the company of ſinners, they fancied was not the Chriſt, but only a Prophet? But when in proceſs of time, both Jeſus who was taken for a Prophet, appeared to be the Chriſt; and John who was taken for the Chriſt, was diſcovered to be but a Prophet: then was fulfilled what he had foretold, He muſt increaſe and I muſt decreaſe. For *both our Saviour increaſed in the eſteem of the people, becauſe he was acknowledged to be what he was; and John decreaſed, becauſe he ceaſed to be called what he was not.*

2. And this leads me to the next conſideration, which I ſhall but briefly mention. That as *John* directed them to prefer our Saviours *Baptiſm* before his, and to become the Diſciples of a far greater Maſter: ſo the end of the Baptiſm of *Jeſus* was to entertain men for his Diſciples, that thereby they might make profeſſion of their belief in him. And here now our Saviour began to eclipſe the luſtre of *John*, and ſhowed himſelf much ſuperiour to him: both in that he did not adminiſter *Baptiſm* himſelf by his own hands, as *John* did,

did, but appointed his Disciples to do it, who thereby became equal with *John*; and that he gathered Disciples to *himself*, whereas *John* Baptized them into the belief of him that was to come after him, as you read expresly, xix. *Acts* 4. None I suppose can doubt of this, but that they who received baptism from our Saviour's Disciples, who waited constantly upon him, did thereby own *Jesus* for *a Teacher* or Master *sent of God* (as *Nicodemus* speaks, iii. *John* 2.) and consequently professed themselves desirous to learn of him, and ready to believe what he taught. But I cannot say that they baptized them now into the Name of *Jesus*, or into a belief that he was *the Christ*, as they did after his ascension into Heaven. For they were forbid to publish this openly, xvi. *Matth.* 20. men were to learn it by degrees under his discipline, to which they delivered themselves by being baptized of him. Yet this prepared them for the belief that he was their *Christ*: which his Apostles afterward most zealously and strongly asserted by Baptism. For when he was exalted at Gods right hand, they went, according to his Commission, and *Discipled all Nations*, baptizing them into his name, as well as into the name of the Father.

That is, they engaged them to believe, that *Jeſus* was the Chriſt, the Son of God, otherways they would not baptize them.

By this WATER therefore he may be ſaid to *come*, becauſe he hereby made proſelytes to himſelf, whom he undertook to teach and inſtruct after the manner of the Prophets, but with an authority which ſpoke him to be greater than all Prophets; and becauſe it was not a baptiſm like *John*'s, with ſimple water, but was preſently after accompanied with the Holy Ghoſt. Nay, the Baptiſm it ſelf was a WITNESS to him (joyned with what went before) becauſe it argued authority, and ſuch as was much ſuperiour to that of *John*, though he was greater than any Prophet: which could be no other therefore but that of *Chriſt*. For who beſide could baptize the whole Nation, and into an higher Inſtitution, than his whom they took for the Chriſt? who confeſſed and aſſerted (and no body appeared to contradict it) that he *was not that light* (by whom they muſt begin to be *illuminated* by Baptiſm) but *Jeſus* was *the true light, which coming into the world lighteneth every man.* *John*'s baptiſm therefore, as

S. *Baſil*

S. *Basil** aptly calls it, was only εἰσαγωγικὸν, introductory to something else more perfect than it self: that is, to our Saviour's baptism, which was τελειωτικὸν, that which completed men in a full belief that he was the *Christ*.

* *Exhort. ad Bapt.*

3. For lastly, the Baptism which the Apostles administred, especially after his Resurrection and Exaltation, was an entrance of men into a new Religion: For they did not baptize them *into Moses*, but into another Name, that of the *Lord Jesus*. This was a sign that He, who had so many ways been approved of God among them, as S. *Peter* speaks, was indeed the Christ. For what greater mark could there be of supreme authority, than the setting up, in such a manner as he did, an Institution and Discipline which was not known before; and teaching those who received his baptism, to observe a new Law, without those rites which had been hitherto used? Who could repeal the Ordinances of *Moses*, nay, abrogate Circumcision, which was ancienter than *Moses*; but only He who had the same power with him that gave the Law to *Moses*, and Circumcision to *Abraham* their Father, *viz.* the Son of God himself? Yet

this did our *Jeſus*; and Baptiſm was the Rite appointed by him for the admiſſion of Diſciples into the profeſſion of this new Religion, which took away the old as unprofitable. By this they were *born again*, and became his children, that is, his ſcholars (for the *ſons* or children *of the Prophets* were their diſciples, thoſe who learnt of them) whom he indued with his principles and called after his name. And he plainly declared, as you read in his diſcourſe with *Nicodemus*, that no man could have any part in that Kingdom, which the Meſſiah was ſetting up in the world, if he contented himſelf with the old Religion, and were not *by baptiſm born again*; that is, ſuffered himſelf to be further informed, and proceeded to entertain the Religion which he delivered. Thus far *Nicodemus* was gone already, to believe him to be *a Maſter ſent of God*, which was the opinion of others of their Rulers beſides himſelf; for he ſays *WE know* it. Why then did he not own it by receiving his baptiſm, and thereby put himſelf under the diſcipline of this Maſter? That being inſtructed by him till he acknowledged that he was *the Chriſt*, he might be taught at laſt *by the Spirit*, when it came down upon the Apoſtles; and ſo be perfectly

born

born again, or informed in the Christian Religion. Till this was done he was but ἐξ ἡμισείας φιλόχριστος (as *Gregory Nazianz.* * calls him) *a lover of Christ by halves.* To make him an intire Christian, he was to receive his Baptism, and to own him to have full power and authority from God to make what change he pleased, so far as to turn them into new men, and to make them over again. The *Pharisees* one would think saw very well that this was the consequence of his gathering so many disciples by baptism, that he out-did *John* the Baptist. For to avoid their rage which they had conceived against *him* upon this account, but never expressed against *John*, *he left Judea* (where he was baptizing, as you heard before, iii. 22.) because they had great power there, and *departed into Galilee again*, where their authority was less, iv. 1, 2, 3. They were afraid of an innovation in the state of things, which they had a mind should continue as they were. Their Baptism they saw would signifie nothing, if he went on thus to make disciples. Whom he informed according to his own mind, and perswaded to believe on him as their *King*, in whose Sovereign power it was to make *all old things pass away, and cause all things to become new.*

* Orat. 16.

By this WATER therefore He may be ſaid to COME, and it may be called one of his WITNESSES, as he *baptized*, that is, gave his Apoſtles authority to baptize men, not into *Moſes*, but into himſelf; to learn new leſſons of him, and to leave the old, though they had been taught by God himſelf. Who found no fault at all with this *baptiſm*, but juſtified it, as you ſhall ſee, many ways, to be according to his mind, and in purſuance of his will.

And ſo much pains may ſuffice about the examination of the *firſt* WITNESS of theſe *three* that ſpeak on *Earth*, which is WATER: The *Holineſs* of *Jeſus* both in his Doctrine and Life; and the *Baptiſm*, both of *John* and of *Jeſus*.

I wiſh that every one who conſiders how great and neceſſary a proof this was, of *Jeſus* his being the Son of God, would labour to prove himſelf to be indeed born of him by the ſame argument of purity and holineſs. For as we could never have believed *Jeſus* to have been God's Son, unleſs he had come thus by Water; no more can any man rationally conclude that

that he is one of thoſe whom he will own for his children, unleſs he conform to his holy will, by waſhing himſelf from all filthineſs, and becoming clean every whit. Read over the Sermons and the Life of Chriſt, and remember that your Baptiſm engages you to learn of him, and to become like him. Expreſs that Honour towards God, that Fear and that Love of him which he requires. Imploy your ſelves carefully in all actions of Juſtice, Charity, and Sobriety. Yea, be prepared chearfully to follow him, in ſuffering as well as in doing his bleſſed will. This will be an infallible teſtimony, that you are the children of God; as, on the contrary, if you want this Witneſs, all other evidence of it will fail you. There is no reaſon to diſtruſt this; but the ſtronger your confidence is without it, the more groſly you deceive your ſelves, if you conclude your ſelves to be dear to him. You find both theſe ſtrongly aſſerted in this Epiſtle. For the Affirmative read, ii. 29. *If ye know that he is righteous, know ye that every one that doth righteouſneſs is born of him.* And iii. 7. *Little children, let no man deceive you; he that doth righteouſneſs, is righteous, even as he is righteous.* For the Negative, read the following words,

ver. 8, 9, 10. *He that committeth ſin, is of the Devil; for the Devil ſinneth from the beginning. For this purpoſe the Son of God was manifeſted, that he might deſtroy the works of the Devil. Whoſoever is born of God, doth not commit ſin; for his ſeed remaineth in him; and he cannot ſin, becauſe he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifeſt, and the children of the Devil: whoſoever doth not righteouſneſs, is not of God, neither he that loveth not his Brother.*

And for your encouragement to purifie your Souls, remember that the purity and holineſs of Chriſt's Life and Doctrine, ſecures you of the truth of all his gracious promiſes. We may ſay with a greater aſſurance than the *Pſalmiſt* did in his days (xii. *Pſal.* 6.) *The words of the Lord* (i.e. his promiſes) *are pure words; as ſilver tried in a furnace of Earth, purified ſeven times.* Which ſhould make us value them more than *thouſands of Gold and Silver,* though never ſo perfectly refined; and to ſay as he does in another place, cxix. 140. *Thy word is very pure, therefore thy ſervant loveth it.* Thoſe Metals are not freer from Droſs, after they have paſſed never ſo oft through the Fining-pot, than his promiſes

are

are from all mixture of deceit. We may rely upon them with the greateſt confidence, and be ſecure they will never fail us. It is as certainly true, that God will take us to be his Sons and Daughters, that he will *dwell in* us, and give us everlaſting life, as it is, that *Jeſus* is the Son of God. He that ſays the one, ſays the other too: and he may be alike believed in both.

But then, *having theſe promiſes, we muſt cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh and ſpirit, perfecting holineſs in the fear of God*, 2 *Cor.* vii. 1. For the Son of God was manifeſted, you heard, for this purpoſe. And this was the end for which *he gave himſelf* (*i. e.* to die for us) *that he might ſanctifie and cleanſe his Church, with the waſhing of Water, by the Word* (v. Epheſ. 26.) *and redeeming us from all iniquity, purifie to himſelf a peculiar people Zealous of good works*, i. *Tit.* 14. Which if we ſtudy ſincerely, then this WATER here ſpoken of, is part of the *Waters of Life*: and this Teſtimony gives us aſſurance that we ſhall have our ſhare in thoſe Eternal good things, which he hath promiſed in his holy Goſpel: For he is the Truth, and in him there is no Lye. But of this more hereafter, when we have heard the following

lowing Witneſſes, and given glory to *Jeſus,* and made our acknowledgments to him in ſome ſuch words as theſe.

A Prayer.

I *Believe,* O *Lord, not only that thou art* a Teacher come from God, *and* ſpeakeſt the words of God; *but that thou art* above all, *the very* WORD *of God it ſelf; into whoſe hands* the Father hath given all things. *I admire the holineſs of all thy Precepts, and rejoyce in the purity of thy exceeding great and precious promiſes. Thou art* the Truth, *the* Holy one of God, *without ſpot or blemiſh, in whoſe mouth was found* no guile. *There is all reaſon that we ſhould* receive thy teſtimony, *which thou haſt given of thy ſelf; and all that thou haſt teſtified to us to be the will of God; and believe that* without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord.

Good Lord, increaſe my Faith: *that as I ſee ſtill further demonſtrations of thy power and glory, and cannot but acknowledge the perfect*

perfect ſanctity, equity and goodneſs of all thy Laws, and be in love with the beauty of thy moſt holy life; ſo I may feel my heart inclined more and more to ſubmit it ſelf to be governed by thee, to obey thy will, and to imitate thy example. Happy are thoſe holy Souls who have learnt of thee to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent world; *and whoſe hearts, by that means, are full of the bleſſed hope of immortality hereafter, and of thy tender care of them, while they are here. There is nothing ſo deſirable, as* to be holy even as thou who haſt called us art holy, in all manner of converſation. *It is the perfection of our Nature, the end of our Being, and the true ſatisfaction of our hearts; to have thy image formed in us in righteouſneſs and ſincere holineſs. Imprint this ſenſe deeper, O bleſſed God, in mine and every Chriſtian heart. That it may be our perpetual delight, as well as our ſtudy, to give thee the* honour *that is due unto thy Name; to* love *thee with all our heart and ſoul and ſtrength; to preſerve an holy* fear *of thee in our mind; to* truſt *in thee and caſt our care upon thee; to* hope *in thy never-failing mercies; and to* rejoyce *evermore in thy love and that good hope, which are better than life it ſelf.*

O that we may never ceaſe to teſtifie our true love, and honour, and fear of thee, with all other religious affections, by praying *without ceaſing; and offering the ſacrifice of* praiſe *continually; and in every thing* giving thanks, *eſpecially for the oblation which our Lord made of himſelf to thee: which love, may it be publiſhed with perpetual praiſe and thanks, every where, to the end of the world. And give us the grace to add unto our love of thee, a ſincere and unfeigned love of all men. That* we may do to them, whatſoever we deſire that they ſhould do to us. *Let this be the conſtant Rule of all our deſigns, deſires, words and actions. Let it ever be before our eyes, to make us duly honour and obſerve our ſuperiours; pity, ſuccour, relieve, and comfort all thoſe who are below us; and be juſt, faithful and friendly to all others. O that every man would ſpeak the truth with his neighbour; and be charitable in their judgments one of another; meek and gentle in all their words and behaviour, ready to diſtribute and to do good; ſtudious of the things that make for peace; forward to be reconciled to thoſe who have offended them; to paſs by injuries, and to do good for evil; and eſpecially to* be kindly affectioned one to another in the love of the Brethren; in honour preventing one another.

For

For which end, endue us all with true humility of Spirit; with very contented minds and moderate desires. Let no covetousness, no ambition, or love of any pleasure, betray us to dishonour thee, hurt our neighbours, or abuse our selves. Help us to possess our bodies in sanctification and honour; to preserve our hearts chaste and pure; to be temperate in all things; to mortifie our members that are on the Earth; to put away all foolish talking and corrupt communication out of our mouth; and to abstain from all appearance of evil.

Finally, whatsoever things are sincere and true, whatsoever things are grave and honest, whatsoever things are just and equal, whatsoever things are pure and modest, whatsoever things are amiable and endearing, whatsoever things are of good fame and well spoken of, if there be any occasion to exercise a vertue, if there be any thing laudable, dispose us to have these things always in our mind, and to be readily prepared for them. That so we may be good in every relation; Governours and Subjects, Priests and People, Husbands and Wives, Parents and Children, Masters and Servants, doing their duties faithfully, and to their mutual comfort, joy and satisfaction. And if thy wise Providence

call

call any of us to part with any thing for thy names ſake, O that our Love *may give an eminent proof of its ſincerity, by reſolved and patient ſuffering, with an humble, meek and chearful ſubmiſſion to thy holy will.*

Then ſhall our Souls rejoyce and triumph in thee, when we not only call thee, Lord and Maſter, *but* do thoſe things that thou ſayeſt. *It will be our exceeding joy to think that thou loveſt us as thy children, and delighteſt to behold thine own Image in us. We ſhall rejoyce that thou reigneſt, and rejoyce again in hope that we ſhall reign with thee. Bleſſing, honour, glory and praiſe ſhall we be for ever giving unto thee ; who haſt* waſhed us from our ſins in thy own bloud, *and* redeemed us from all iniquity, that we ſhould be holy and unblameable before God in love ; looking for thy mercy unto eternal life. *Amen*, and *Amen.*

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Concerning the Second *Witneſs upon Earth, the* BLOUD.

COME we now to hear what the next *Witneſs* ſays, which we ſhall find to give in an Evidence as ſtrong as the former, and that is *the* BLOUD. By this word every body preſently underſtands the *Sufferings* and DEATH of *Jeſus*; when his *Bloud*, you know, was ſhed upon the Croſs, in a moſt ignominious manner. For that envy which began to riſe in the *Phariſees* hearts (as I obſerved in the end of the foregoing Chapter, from iv. *John* 1.) when they ſaw him baptize ſo many diſciples; never ceaſed boiling till it turned into perfect Gall, and the rankeſt hatred and malice in the World: which was never ſatisfied till they had *baptized him* (as S. *Luke* ſpeaks, xii. 50.) with his own bloud.

bloud. For the preſent indeed, as you read there and in many other places, he avoided their ſnares, and went out of their way when he thought they intended to apprehend him, becauſe he would preſerve himſelf till he had preached all the Country over. But when that was done, he ſuffered them to take him at a publick feaſt, and delivering up himſelf into their hands, let them do with him juſt as their murderous malice inclined them.

Now this voluntary Oblation and Sacrifice of himſelf to ſuffer what they pleaſed to inflict, was ſuch an evidence, that in truth he was the Son of God, as he had made his diſciples believe, that there is a particular mark ſet upon it, to this purpoſe, both by himſelf and by his Apoſtles. He himſelf, in his diſcourſe with *Pontius Pilate*, juſt before his crucifixion, and when he ſtood before him condemned by the *Jews*, for ſaying he was the *Son of God*, expreſly affirms, that *for this end he was born, and therefore he came into the world, that he might bear witneſs to the truth*, xviii. *John* 37. Which was as much as to declare, that he had rather die than loſe the end for which he had lived thus long; which was, to ſpeak the Truth, and particularly

ticularly this Truth, that he was indeed a KING (as you there read) the very Son of God. This was the thing he would juſtifie, whatſoever he ſuffered for it. God had appointed him to ſeal this with his death, and to atteſt it in the moſt ſolemn manner, even before his Judge here on Earth, and when he was going to be judged by God; and therefore he would not for all the world deny it, or not confeſs it. We ordinarily ſay, when we would affirm any thing very ſtrongly, that if it was the laſt thing that ever we ſhould ſpeak, we would not ſtick to maintain it. And juſt ſo did our Saviour; I came, ſays he, into the world for this end, to *bear witneſs to the truth*, and here I take it upon my death that I do not ſwerve from it in the leaſt, when I ſay, that I am the *Son of God.*

S. *Paul* alſo, as I have noted already, takes particular notice of this, when he remembers *Timothy*, 1 vi. 13. how *Jeſus did WITNESS a good confeſſion before Pontius Pilate.* That is, aſſerted this Truth, that he was a KING, though not of this world, by confeſſing it before him, who ſate in judgment upon him, with the apparent danger of his life. He durſt not

retract any thing which he knew to be a truth, though he knew withall it would prove ſo coſtly, that he muſt defend it with his *bloud*. He ſtood in this to the very laſt, that he was the CHRIST, and durſt not to ſave ſuch a precious life ſpeak one word otherwiſe: for then he knew that he ſhould have been a lyar, like the *Jews* who denied it.

This that hath been thus premiſed to the following diſcourſe, is very ſerviceable to the demonſtrating what a Witneſs his BLOUD was: becauſe it calls to mind that which is neceſſary to be here again conſidered, how he loſt his life for nothing elſe, but merely becauſe he confeſſed that he was *their CHRIST, the Son of the Bleſſed*. Many cauſes of death were induſtriouſly ſought for, and ſundry falſe witneſſes boldly roſe up againſt him; and yet none of their teſtimonies, when they came to be ſcan'd, were found to be ἴσαι (as S. *Mark*'s expreſſion is, xiv. 56, 59.) *equal* to the endictment or charge that was brought againſt him, and to the intended judgment which was to paſs upon him. There was nothing ponderous enough, of ſufficient weight to juſtifie ſuch a ſentence as that of death, which they were deſirous

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to pronounce upon him: and therefore they deſpaired of attaining their end, unleſs they could have ſuch words out of his own mouth, as in their opinion would prove him a blaſphemer; for which they might juſtly condemn him. *Which of you* (ſays he himſelf, viii. *John* 46.) *convinceth me of ſin?* No, when they muſt either prove *him* a ſinner, or *themſelves* for apprehending him without a cauſe; they were not able, no, not by the help of a great ſin, in bringing falſe witneſſes into open Court, to faſten any crime upon him, which would touch his life. All that they could find to warrant a ſentence ſo heavy, was nothing but what they got out of his own mouth; by adjuring him in the name of God, to tell them whether he were *the CHRIST.*

His affirming this was the thing for which he was adjudged by the great Council of *Jeruſalem*, to ſuffer death. This was the only truth they told *Pilate*, when they brought him into his Court, that *he made himſelf CHRIST, a KING*, xxiii. *Luke* 2. xix. *John* 7. This was the inſcription over his head, the Title upon the Croſs, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS, xxiii. *Luke* 38. This was

the thing they ſcoffed at, after they had condemned him themſelves, xxvi. *Matth.* 68. and which they taught the ſouldiers to mock him withall, after he was condemned by *Pilate*, xv. *Mark* 18. and which the Chief Prieſt, with the Scribes and Elders, made the ſubject of their taunts and jeers, as he hung upon the Croſs, xxvii. *Matth.* 40, 41, 42, 43. Read all theſe places, and you will ſee, that the aſſerting of this being the cauſe of his ſufferings and ſhame, S. *John* had reaſon to alledge his BLOUD as a great evidence or *Witneſs* to this Truth.

Now that the ſtrength of its teſtimony may the better appear, let theſe things following be diſtinctly conſidered.

I. *Firſt*, that *Bloud* is the life of every living Creature; and therefore the pouring out of this is the loſing of ones life. It is not only a frequent Precept in the Law of *Moſes*, that they ſhould not eat the *bloud*, becauſe it was the life of the Beaſt; but common obſervation teaches us, that it is the Vehicle or Chariot wherein the Spirits ride their Circuit round the Body; and that if it loſe its way and run out of the Body, all motion ceaſes, the Spirits flying away together with it. II. Con-

II. Conſider then further, that nothing is ſo ſweet as Life, and that of all other things we naturally moſt abhor death. All that we eat and drink is to prevent it; and men are too much inclined to do unworthy things to eſcape it, becauſe it robs us of all our enjoyments here, though never ſo near to us. *Skin upon skin* (ſays he who *hath the power of death*, ii. *Job* 4.) one skin after another, though it be never ſo tender and delicate, and never ſo painful to part with it, *Yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life.*

III. Life therefore being a thing ſo pleaſant and deſirable, and Death ſo diſmal and affrightful; no man ſure in his perfect health and perfect wits, will be perſwaded to part with the one and run headlong into the other, for a mere fancy by which he received no benefit at all while he lived, and can hope for none when he is dead. What rational man is there (as our Saviour appears to be by all his diſcourſes and actions) who knows the value of Life; who that is not in a frenzy (the leaſt ſpice of which is not diſcernible in him) will chuſe to part with his life,

and ſo part with all his Friends, who are infinitely deſirous of his company; when he may innocently ſave it, and comfortably enjoy thoſe lovers, friends and acquaintance, and all other things which he muſt leave by dying? Ask your ſelves, (that's the beſt way) is Life ſuch a trifle, that any of you are inclined to throw it away in a mere humour? Is it ſo contemptible, that a ſerious man and one that need not be miſerable, will ſtudiouſly loſe it, only to be talkt of? Nay, would any of you take the moſt cruel pains and torments in your way to Death, and paſs out of the world with all the diſgrace imaginable, merely becauſe you will? when it is as much in your power to free your ſelves from them all, and to live in pleaſure, honour and good repute among your neighbours?

IV. Much leſs would any man, that is not beſide himſelf, die for a lye. Death being uncomfortable in it ſelf, would become ſtill more diſmal if it ſhould be for that which we ſaw proved an *untruth*; but moſt of all black and dreadful if it muſt be endured for *a lye*; that is, for ſuch an untruth as we had deviſed our ſelves, and knew to be a falſity; and whereby we intended

intended to deceive, and might have choſen whether we would have told it or no. If any man ſhould be tempted to tell a lye, yet what ſhould tempt him to endure the rack, yea to ſuffer death for it; when neither He nor any man elſe ſhall get any thing by it, and he might live far more honourably by telling the truth? Make your ſelves Judges, and enquire of your own minds, whether you can think of any thing that hath ſuch a power of perſwaſion in it. No, no, we all love life better than ſo. When a man will give all that he hath for it (as the Tempter himſelf ſaid) it were very ſtrange if he ſhould not part with a vain lye, that he might enjoy it.

And therefore the Apoſtle here bids us conſider this, that *Jeſus* CAME not *by WATER only*, but *by Water and* BLOUD. That is, He did not only *preach* this, and by his holy *Life* juſtifie his integrity in what he ſaid, but He *died* to atteſt this, and make it good. If the WATER be not enough to perſwade us that he did not falſifie, yet the *Water* and BLOUD together are ſufficient to confirm us in a ſtrong belief of his ſincerity. For ſhould the tongue of an honeſt man chance to ſlip,

and to ſpeak on a ſudden what he knew to be falſe, yet he would never be ſuch a fool and a villain too, as to die to make it good: whereas *Jeſus* both ſaid and took it upon his death, that he was Gods Son; in neither of which ſuch a perſon as he could poſſibly deſign to deceive us. He was not ſo ſhallow but he could eaſily ſee that a lye would ſometime or other be diſproved; for all men naturally hate it, and, when they have any ſuſpicion, can never be at reſt till they have diſcovered it. And therefore if he propoſed to himſelf glory and honour, fame and a great reputation after a ſhameful death, he could never be ſecure that he ſhould win it, but rather had juſt cauſe to fear the forgery would be detected: And then it would have proved a greater blot upon him, and more reproached his name, that he was a wilful obſtinate Lyar, than the Croſs or Gibbet, the buffetings, ſpittings, cruel mockings, and all the other indignities that he endured. This would have branded him with eternal infamy, and have made his name ſtink throughout the world. Nothing could have ſtigmatized him like this (unleſs it had been the mark of folly added to that of inſincerity) that he was a ſhameleſs deceiver. And there-

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fore I conclude that he would *have witneſſed a good confeſſion* by denying all that he had ſaid concerning his being the *Son of God*; if he had not known aſſuredly that he had ſaid nothing but that great Truth, which muſt not be denied, whatſoever miſeries and diſgraces it coſt him to make it good.

V. And this truly is much to be conſidered, that if he had been wont to cheat and ſpeak falſely, there could not have been a more ſeaſonable time to make uſe of ſome lye, than now that it would coſt him his life to aſſert this, which, no doubt, he took for a truth. If he would but have denied this one thing, and ſaid that he was not the Son of God; all their malice, as I ſaid, could not have found a crime great enough to warrant the taking away of his life according to their Law. And therefore ſuppoſing him an Impoſtor and deceiver, as the *Jews* called him, he muſt be a very ſilly one, who would not now make uſe of his art to ſave himſelf; when that one little word *NO* would have done it, in anſwer to the queſtion, that the High Prieſt put to him. For what reaſon can be imagined why he ſhould now ſcruple to tell an untruth (if he

were

were a man of that ſtamp) which would bring ſuch a great advantage to him as the preſervation of his life.

VI. He might at leaſt (eſpecially if he had dealt with *Beelzebub*, as the *Phariſees* calumniated him) have put ſome trick or other upon them, and ſhifted himſelf out of the hands of his enemies; for that would have got him more credit and fame than dying for a lye. Why did he not eſcape from them, if he had not both believed this, that he was the *Son of God*, and thought it neceſſary alſo to atteſt it, even with his BLOUD? Had he not opportunity to run away? or rather might he not have kept himſelf among his friends, far enough out of their reach? Was it not a queſtion whether he would come to the feaſt or not? xi. *John* 56. Nay, after *the aſſembly of the wicked had incloſed him*, as the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks, had he not power to break through them, and make his eſcape? Yes ſure; for what elſe is the meaning of that which you read, xviii. *John* 6. that the *band* of men which came to apprehend him, *went backward, and fell to the ground*; when he did but tell them that He was the man whom they ſought for? Was not this a fit time to flye and get

get away, when they had no ſtrength to lay hold on him? Had not he power as well to depart, as to weaken their hands that they could not approach him? Nay, was it not far eaſier to go away himſelf, than to make them lie proſtrate there? No doubt of it: only he would ſtand to it, as I ſaid, and make it good by his Bloud that he was the Son of God. He ſhowed that he had not loſt his power to baffle them, but his will was not to uſe it. His death was a voluntary Sacrifice; *He laid down his life* of his own accord, and *no man took it from him*, as it is x. *John* 18. All their Armies, had they *compaſſed him about* (to ſpeak in the *Pſalmiſts* phraſe) *as ſtrong Bulls of Baſhan*; had they *gaped upon him with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring Lion, i. e.* with the moſt greedy deſire to devour him, could not have touched him, unleſs he had been pleaſed to deliver himſelf up to their fury, and choſen to become their prey, that they might do execution upon him. And therefore it is moſt abſurd, and contrary to nature, to imagine, that He would have thus freely expoſed himſelf to ſuch cruelties and vile uſage as he ſaw was intended for him; unleſs he had certainly thought it a moſt eligible and honourable

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thing to endure them, in defence of a great Truth, which it concerned all the world to have well aſſerted, and vindicated from all ſuſpicion of falſhood.

Would it not have angred any man but Him, to be betrayed by a domeſtick ſervant, by a Friend; one whom he had freely choſen to be a great Miniſter in his Kingdom, and had made at preſent the keeper of his purſe, beſides many other favours conferred on him? Was it not a vile diſhonour, firſt to be brought before the Magiſtrate as a Criminal, and then to be abuſed there by baſe ſouldiers, and the dregs of the people; as if there had not been a more contemptible wretch in the whole Country? What was it then to be beaten and cudgelled? to be ſpit upon and mocked? to be loaden with lyes and forgeries? to be condemned to ſuffer among thieves? to be counted leſs worthy to live than a murderer? to be ſcourged? to be crowned with thorns? to be crucified? that is, to endure a tedious, a diſgraceful, a painful and accurſed death; and after all this to be unpitied; to be laught at even upon the Croſs, and called a ſenſeleſs deceiver, who had not the wit to keep ſome of his kindneſs for himſelf; but

but having ſaved the lives of others could not now at laſt ſave his own? Can you think of any one that would have the heart to offer himſelf freely to ſuffer ſuch things, but only He, who took all this ſo patiently, that he did not utter one diſcontented or angry word? And who can think that he would have endured them, when he might have eaſily avoided it, unleſs he had thought it neceſſary and worthy to ſubmit himſelf to ſuch torments and reproaches, that he might confirm this Truth, and make it live by his bloudy death?

VII. Which had the greater efficacy in it to ſhow the importance of this Truth, and the certainty which he had of it; becauſe he affirmed it not only before the High Prieſt, when it was apparent they intended miſchief againſt him, but before *Pontius Pilate* alſo, as I obſerved above from xviii. *John* 37. when they were importunately deſiring him to condemn him. If we could imagine it was his raſhneſs and heat that made him ſay as he did, before the Council of *Jeruſalem*; yet he had time enough ſure to have cooled himſelf, before he came to be tried at this other tribunal of the *Gentiles*. Why did he not think of

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ſome other anſwer, now that he ſaw the *Jews* were not in a ſudden paſſion, and tranſported with a fit of rage to condemn him; but by a concocted hatred were reſolved to purſue him till they had his bloud? There can no account be given of it but this, That his Death was an adviſed thing, and his BLOUD deliberately ſhed, to obtain the greater belief to him; becauſe he profeſſed again and again (though he knew he muſt die for it) that He was *CHRIST their KING.*

VIII. And obſerve likewiſe, that even when he was in the midſt of his ſufferings, and when he was ready to give up the ghoſt, He again ſets his ſeal to this Truth; calling God his FATHER twice as he hung upon the Croſs. Firſt when he prayed for his Enemies, *FATHER forgive them,* xxiii. *Luke* 36. and then when he prayed for himſelf, *FATHER into thy hands I commend my Spirit, ver.* 46. With theſe words he reſigned up his Soul to God. And had it not been a ſeaſonable time now to retract what he had ſaid, if it had not been a Truth which muſt be juſtified to the laſt gaſp? How can any one think that a man who preached the Life and Judgment to come, and lived as if he believed it,

it, would venture to die with a lye in his mouth? and that of ſo high a guilt? and which he knew alſo could not be long undetected here, as it would be ſeverely puniſht in another place? nay, which He himſelf, he knew very well, would preſently confute? For he frequently had ſaid, as his very enemies underſtood, that he would riſe again the third day after he was killed; which he muſt needs think would prove a lye, if the other had been ſo, when he told them he was the *Son of God.*

God who only can raiſe the dead, but cannot lye, would never have juſtified ſo blaſphemous a lye as this; and given it an undeniable authority, by fulfilling his word. For as his bloudy death plainly proved that he believed himſelf to be the Son of God, and took it for an undoubted truth; ſo his Reſurrection was an infallible proof that he was not miſtaken, but had witneſſed that by his death, which was as true as he thought it. His Death ſhow'd that he was certain of it; and his Reſurrection makes us certain that he was not deceived. Theſe two therefore muſt be joyned together to make up a complete evidence: and ſo they are, as

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you ſhall ſee, for the Witneſs of the SPIRIT contains the Reſurrection in it. Yet I muſt add that his BLOUD conſidered alone, did not barely prove that he believed he was Gods Son, and thought it the greateſt ſin to deny it; but it proved alſo that he had great reaſon for ſuch a belief; Reaſons ſo weighty that they overbalanced the natural love of life. And therefore this alone may be called one of his *Witneſſes*, which not only juſtified his integrity, but declared that he had the greateſt aſſurance, and the cleareſt evidence of that which he aſſerted: being ſo certain of it, that the fear of death could not make him doubt it, nor all the torments in the world tempt him to deny it.

IX. And if you conſider what manner of perſon *Jeſus* was, you will ſoon be ſatisfied alſo, that he was not liable to miſtake ſtrong fancies for weighty reaſons: but was as far from being deceived himſelf, as he was from any intention to deceive others. The principal thing indeed which his *Bloud* teſtified was, that he did not on ſet purpoſe go about to put a cheat upon the World, or invented his Doctrine himſelf. Yet, all things conſidered, it proves

proves likewiſe that his Doctrine was true, and ought to be believed by us. For ſuch was the quality of his perſon and of the reſt of his Doctrine, that they plainly manifeſt He was neither led by fancy, nor poſſeſſed with any Demoniacal illuſion, when he ſaid he was *the Son of God.* So great was his wiſdom and the ſharpneſs of his underſtanding, that any man who hath not loſt his own underſtanding, may eaſily ſee, he could not be apt to be gull'd with the impoſtures of imagination. And ſo great and diſcreet was his Piety, that it is as viſible he was not obnoxious to be deluded any other way. When He was but a child, He amazed the principal men of the Nation with his queſtions and anſwers. And afterward in the whole courſe of his preaching, there appeared nothing but what declared a moſt prudent, ſober and excellently compoſed mind. Nothing of inequality and unevenneſs in his temper. No rapturous diſcourſes or ecſtatical expreſſions. Nothing that ſavoured of Melancholy, which impoſes upon ſome; or of Pride and Vanity which abuſes others. But the greateſt gravity and ſerioufneſs, mixt with admirable ſweetneſs and humility, is the plain character of our Saviour. Then look over

all his Doctrine, and where ſhall we find any that ever ſpoke ſo clearly, and with ſo much Majeſty, of Righteouſneſs, Temperance, Charity and Piety; of all our duty towards God and Man, as he did? Who had the gift of comprehending much in a few, but perſpicuous words; of illuſtrating his Doctrine with apt and familiar reſemblances; of confirming it with powerful arguments, and of confuting all the cavils of his adverſaries with the ſtrongeſt reaſons. None of which things are to be found in any of thoſe who have been abuſed by their own fancies and paſſions, or by the juglings of evil Spirits: as will appear more plainly by conſidering a little more particularly thoſe two cavils.

Let it be taken then for granted, that there have been ſome men who meant not to deceive, that were notwithſtanding ſo overborn by a ſtrong fancy or haughty imagination, as not only to take their own dreams for Divine Revelations, but alſo moſt vehemently to aſſert them, even with the loſs of their liberties, eſtate, nay, and life it ſelf. And ſuppoſe withall that there have been ſome, who were ſo fully poſſeſſed with a conceit of nearer communion with God, that they took themſelves to be

be Chriſt himſelf, or Apoſtles ſent by him; and that no torments could perſwade them to think otherways. Yet ſee what a vaſt difference there is between ſuch vain pretenders and our bleſſed Saviour; even in the very words that they ſpake. And firſt I think it is very conſirable that you never read of any man ſo preſumptuous, as to fancy he was the very Son of God, who ſits at his right hand, and rules over all, and hath power to judge the quick and the dead. No, theſe vain Enthuſiaſts have only conceited, that they were, after I know not what ſpiritual manner, made one with Chriſt, and ſo united to God; that, as they phraſe it in ſwoln words of vanity, they were Godded with God, and Chriſted with Chriſt. But who diſcerns not the diſparity between this fooliſh language and the words of ſoberneſs which our Saviour ſpake? Which indeed is the moſt remarkable thing. If you conſider all the Doctrine of theſe empty Pretenders, there is nothing more ridiculous. They have ever affected big words, lofty and high-flown phraſes, and myſtical expreſſions, wherewith they love to ſtuff their Books and their diſcourſes: which either have no meaning; or if they have, it is very poor

and deſpicable, when it comes to be ſtript of the fantaſtical language wherewith it is cloathed. And therefore ſuch men have been ſo far from amazing any conſiderate perſons, that they have rather moved their laughter and ſcorn, while they heard them babble nothing but myſtical nonſence, with abundance of confident boldneſs.

And if they have found any followers, they were ſuch as had no depth, no ſolidity of judgment; but were carried away merely with the ſound of ſeemingly myſtical words; which they could never make any ſober perſon underſtand the ſence of. Whereas, on the contrary, the words of our Saviour are not only intelligible, but penetrate into the very heart and ſoul of him that reads them. Every man bears witneſs to moſt of them in his own Conſcience: And the reſt are ſuch as plainly aim at the ſame end, to oblige and encourage us to be more ſtrictly pious. And therefore He aſtoniſhed all his Auditors; who acknowledged an Authority in his words, greater than was in the diſcourſes of the wiſeſt men among them. They ſaid, never man ſpake like him. Whole Synagogues, as I have ſhown, wondred at the gracious words, that proceeded

ceeded out of his mouth. They enquired one of another, how a man ſhould come by all that wiſdom, who had no learned education. His adverſaries were often ſilenced by his anſwers. They found themſelves ſo non-pluſt, that they durſt not ask him any more queſtions, merely for fear of being more confounded. All which, and much more that might be ſaid, is a ſufficient evidence that he knew very well what He ſaid, and underſtood his doctrine, and was a perſon of a clear reaſon; who could not be abuſed by the impoſtures of fancy and imagination.

X. And as for the other cavil, that poſſibly a man may ſuffer the illuſion of evil Spirits, which may make him confident without reaſon: Let it be alſo granted, becauſe the Devil hath ſometimes *tranſformed himſelf into an Angel of light*, as the Apoſtle S. *Paul* ſpeaks; and ſo might perſwade men that God or an Angel had ſpoken to them, or that they had viſions and revelations from above; with which conceit He might ſo poſſeſs them, that they might be ready to take it upon their death, that they ſaid nothing but the Truth. But withall it is notoriouſly evident that ſuch a perſon as our Saviour could not be

liable to ſuch diabolical impreſſions. For *firſt*, the holineſs of his doctrine, which overthrows the Devils kingdom and authority, plainly ſhows how much he was in the favour of God. And ſecondly, his conqueſts over the Devil when he aſſaulted him with his temptations, his turning him out of his poſſeſſion every where, and making him acknowledge his authority, is an evident token how much ſuperiour he was to him, and ſo not obnoxious to his abuſes. And *thirdly*, they who had been the followers of *Jeſus*, but a little while, were too ſtrong for the Devil, and much above his power to hurt them: and therefore how could he himſelf be touched by him. They are S. *John*'s words in this Epiſtle, ii. 14. *I have written unto you, young men, becauſe ye are ſtrong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.* And again, the further his doctrine was propagated, the more was the kingdom of the Devil overthrown, and all his cheats detected and diſcovered. As all impiety was plucked up by the roots, and godlineſs planted in the room of it: ſo all ſuperſtitious devices, all Magick, all Divination, wherewith he had long gull'd and couzened the World and kept them in Idolatry, were laid

laid ſo naked and bare, that they were aſhamed, and preſently vaniſhed. There is an excellent diſcourſe concerning this in *Athanaſius* his Book, concerning *the Incarnation of the Word*; which muſt not here be entirely tranſcribed, but only theſe few words of it. Τίς ἦν ἄρα καὶ πηλίκος ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστός; Who then, let it be conſi-
"dered, and how great is this CHRIST?
" who by his name and preſence obſcures
" and aboliſhes all things every where;
" and alone prevails over all, and fills the
" whole world with his Diſcipline? Let
" the *Gentiles* that bluſh not to deride and
" laugh at us, tell me, whether He be a
" mere man who does theſe things. If he
" be, why do they not bluſh to ſee one
" man ſtronger than all their Gods? How
" comes he to demonſtrate by his power,
" that they are nothing? But if they will
" call him a Magician, let them tell me
" again how it comes to paſs that he de-
" ſtroys all Magick, and doth not rather
" eſtabliſh it?

He that can fancy all that I have now mentioned to have been done by the Devil, which was ſo much to his prejudice; muſt, one would think, be poſſeſſed with ſome evil Spirit himſelf. There is nothing

can declare a man not to be deceived by the Devil, if this will not; that He is the very perſon who lays open all the Devils frauds, and diſcovers his wiles, and delivers men from all his ſubtil impoſtures. So did our Saviour; and therefore we may conclude that as he believed his doctrine even concerning himſelf, to be true, ſo that was true which he believed: and that he was not deluded, either by his own private Spirit, or by any elſe. And the truth is, his Adverſaries never took him for a vain Enthuſiaſt, or for a man that was ignorantly deceived; but ſtill they accuſe him as a ſubtil Impoſtor, and would fain have had it thought, that he craftily invented what he preached, to deſtroy their credit, and eſtabliſh his own. But this I have ſhown is incredible: For who could imagine that he ſhould gain any credit and reputation by being put to death upon a ſhameful croſs; into which he was not enſnared by their cunning, but foreſaw and frequently foretold, and voluntarily offered himſelf to ſuffer it? Allow him but to be a man of common ſenſe, and you muſt think he would not have contrived this way to procure fame, and to propagate his doctrine in the world: unleſs he had verily thought it to be ſo true, that his

his Croſs, which proved the laughter of the *Gentiles*, and the ſtumbling-block of the *Jews*, could not hinder him from being honoured in the World as the Son of God. Nothing elſe could make him chuſe to die on this manner, but his ſincere belief of what he preached: and there being no cauſe in the world to ſuſpect any thing of a melancholy proud imagination, or a diabolical illuſion that ſhould impoſe upon him ſuch a belief; it remains that our Saviour by his very death proved and confirmed the truth of what he preached. He firſt came by WATER and then he came by BLOUD. And as his BLOUD proves he did not abuſe us, with that which he knew to be falſe; ſo the WATER, his holy Doctrine and Life proves that he had no flaw in his underſtanding, nor was abuſed himſelf with any fancies or illuſions, when he took himſelf to be ſo certainly the Son of God, that he ſealed it with his precious BLOUD.

XI. And it ought to be conſidered alſo, that it was propheſied before by the holy men of God, that their CHRIST ſhould ſuffer, and be deſpiſed of men, and be in nothing more remarkable than in his ſorrows. And therefore his BLOUD was

a ſign to thoſe who believed thoſe prophecies, that *Jeſus* was the CHRIST, eſpecially his bloud ſo diſgracefully ſhed; becauſe He appeared hereby, as well as by other marks, to be the perſon, whom all their inſpired men pointed at and foretold ſhould come to be their King. For the deſcriptions they have left of the cruel uſage and horrible ſufferings of the *Meſſiah* or Chriſt, were anſwered to the life, and exactly fulfilled in our Saviour *Jeſus*, whoſe *torments* rather exceeded than fell ſhort of the tragicalneſs of all their expreſſions. Thence it is that when He had ended all his ſufferings, he ſaid, xix. *John* 30. IT IS FINISHED: and ſo *bowed his head* (*i. e.* did reverence to God) *and gave up the ghoſt*, *i. e.* reſigned his Spirit to God in that prayer which S. *Luke* mentions. By which words [*It is finiſhed*] He bad them mark that now all things that were written of him in the xxii. *Pſalm*, liii. *Iſaiah*, and other places of their holy Books, were perfectly fulfilled, and received ſuch a punctual completion in him, that there remained nothing more to be done, but only to die. He had done all his Fathers will, and finiſhed his whole work in every point, and ſo, having no further buſineſs here, He worſhipped God that

ſent

ſent him, and departed the world to go to him.

XII. It will alſo much advantage this diſcourſe to obſerve the accidents that hapned at our Saviour's death, and accompanied his bloud-ſhedding; which have no ſmall force to verifie what he ſaid concerning himſelf. And to omit the death of *Judas* which prevented our Lord's, and declared that he thought *Jeſus* innocent, and himſelf guilty; together with ſeveral other things which may be better mentioned afterward; let us only obſerve how the Sun contrary to its uſual courſe, when the Moon could not interpoſe it ſelf between its light and them, was eclipſed three whole hours, as he was in his paſſion, xxiii. *Luke* 44, 45. And that in the concluſion of it, *the veil of the Temple* (of that Temple wherein the *Jews* ſo much confided) *was rent in twain from the top to the bottom*, xxvii. Matth. 51. *The Earth quaked, the Rocks rent, and the Graves were opened, and many bodies of Saints which ſlept aroſe, and went out of the Graves after his Reſurrection, and appeared unto many in the holy City, ver.* 52, 53. What judgment can any ſober man make of ſo many ſtrange things concurring at this

this moment? When was it ever heard that the Sun bluſht, as one may ſay, to ſhow its face, and look upon him; when any malefactor or innocent man either was hang'd upon a gibbet? or that the holy place was torn, together with that man's body? or that the Earth groaned when he expired? and the hearts of Rocks trembled when he cried out, and the monuments of the dead opened at his death, which three days after gave them life? All theſe things were peculiar to the death of *Jeſus*, and never met together but only to honour his bloud. And ſo notorious they were, that the *Centurion* and thoſe who under him had the charge at that time to ſee the execution done, were convinced by them and by the words that he ſpake, that he was no Deceiver, but in truth the Son of God.

So S. *Matthew* there relates, *ver.* 54. that *when the Centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jeſus, ſaw the Earthquake, and thoſe things that were done, they feared greatly, ſaying, Truly this man was the Son of God.* Whatſoever the *Jews* had decreed, they ſaw by the diſpleaſure of the Heavens, by the trembling of the Earth, by the hand of God upon the

Temple

Temple (which was ſoon known by the Prieſts) that *Jeſus* had exceeding great wrong done him ; having ſpoken nothing but the truth, when he confeſſed to *Pilate*, that he was the Son of God. They dreaded to think what would be the conſequences of this horrid murder ; and were ſorely afraid that they themſelves, who had attended upon it, ſhould feel ſome of thoſe tokens of Gods wrath, which elſewhere was very viſible. But S. *Mark* tells us that the *Centurion* alſo obſerved the words of our Saviour, as well as was ſtruck with theſe miraculous accidents, and that they helped to convince him, xv. 39. *And when the Centurion which ſtood over againſt him, ſaw that he ſo cried out, and gave up the ghoſt, he ſaid, Truly this man was the Son of God.* That is, when he heard him call God FATHER (for thoſe were the words, as you heard out of S. *Luke* xxiii. 46. which he cried with a loud voice at the giving up of the ghoſt, *Father into thy hands I commend my Spirit*) and when he ſaw that he ſtood in this to the very laſt breath that God was his *Father*, and alſo beheld ſuch ſtrange teſtimonies of it, both in the Heaven and in the Earth, he ſaid without all doubt he ought to have been acknowledged to

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be no leſs than he ſaid, and not crucified as a malefactor. And S. *Luke* relates it thus, that *Jeſus* crying with a loud voice, and ſaying thoſe words before mentioned, *The Centurion ſaw what was done* (that is, all ſpoken of in the precedent verſes, xxiii. *Luke* 44, 45, 46.) *and* GLORIFIED *God ſaying, Certainly this was a righteous man.* "Which was as if he had ſaid, God be "praiſed for ſhowing us the truth, or let "us do God honour in acknowledging the "truth, whatever come of it; I make no "queſtion but this man was innocent, and "ſaid true when he affirmed he was God's "Son; though the *Jews* have got him "crucified for this ſaying, and brought us "to wait upon his execution.

That, as I have often noted, was their quarrel with him, *That he being a man made himſelf equal with God,* x. *John* 33. v. 18. This was the blaſphemy they accuſed him of, that he ſaid, *They ſhould ſee the* SON OF MAN (that is, Himſelf) *ſitting at the right hand of power.* But the *Centurion*, an honeſt *Gentile*, acquitted him of this crime; and ſeeing the things that were done, and hearing the words he uttered, concluded him to be *Righteous*, free from all blame, and not at

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all guilty of that blaſphemy for which he was arraigned and ſuffered: but ought to have been believed and acknowledged as the CHRIST, the Son of the bleſſed. Thus was that fulfilled which our Saviour had foretold, viii. *John* 28. *When ye have lift up the Son of Man* (upon the Croſs) *then ſhall ye know that I am He,* (that is, *the CHRIST*) *and that I do nothing of my ſelf,* (aſſume not this authority of preaching thus without Gods leave) *but as my Father hath taught me, I ſpeak theſe things*; that is, even this that I am his CHRIST is that which he bid me affirm. *And he that ſent me is with me* (to juſtifie what I ſay and do) *the Father hath not left me alone*: (no not upon the Croſs, nor after death, as appears even by this Teſtimony which he forced the *Centurion* to give him) *For I do always thoſe things that pleaſe him.* Keep to my office, that is, both now, and when I ſuffer you to *lift me up* to the Croſs; for God declared that he was never better *pleaſed* with him, than when he laid down his life in this manner, to teſtifie to the truth.

XIII. Which was very much juſtified likewiſe by all that paſſed before this, from the time that the *Sanhedrim* had judg-

ed

ed him worthy of death. In the whole proceſs againſt him, before his condemnation to the Croſs, there were the plaineſt marks of his innocence: and it may juſtly be reputed a notable teſtimony to him, that their very charge againſt him, cleared him; and that he who gave judgment upon him, declared all along he did not deſerve it. Which will make it worthy our conſideration, I think, if I give you as brief a relation as I can of all thoſe paſſages which were preparatory to his Bloudy death, after the Chief Prieſts had *bound him and led him away and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the Governour of Judea.* Who, as ſoon as he had examined him whether he was *the King of the Jews*, and received our Saviours anſwer, that he was, xxvii. *Matth.* 11. preſently diſcerned that it was no Earthly Kingdom (as the *Jews* would have had him believe) to which he pretended, and that he did not at all intend to intrench upon the *Roman* rights: as you may ſee evidently if you mind what follows this in S. *Luke* xxiii. 4. *Then ſaid Pilate to the Chief Prieſts, and to the people, I find no fault in this man.* This netled them very much to hear *him* pronounced innocent, whom they had judged guilty of the higheſt crime, and therefore they

they began with more than ordinary fierceneſs to endeavour to make good their charge; and ſaid *he ſtirred up the people* (to ſedition, which was an argument, had it been true, that he affected a Kingdom in this world which would have been prejudicial to *Cæſar*) *teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to Jeruſalem, ver.* 5. But *Pilate* ſo little believed that his Doctrine tended to the raiſing ſedition, that, to be rid of any further trouble, he lays hold on that word *Galilee*, where they told him he began to preach, and ſent him to *Herod*, the Tetrarch of that Country, who was at that time at *Jeruſalem, ver.* 6, 7. But he was ſoon weary of the buſineſs, and remitted him back to *Pilate, arrayed in a gorgeous robe, ver.* 10, 11. as much as to ſay that he could determine nothing, but that he was a ridiculous Monarch, a mock-King, nothing elſe.

Being returned to *Pilate*, He received from him many teſtimonies of his innocence (notwithſtanding that he affirmed he was a KING) and *Pilate* deviſed by ſundry means to deliver him, becauſe as he told them, neither He nor *Herod* could find any fault in him, which ſhould make

him worthy of death, xxiii. *Luke* 13, 14, 15. *Firſt* of all, he gives them their choice (but plainly ſhowed that his inclinations were to diſmiſs *Jeſus*) whether he ſhould releaſe him, or a notorious villain, who had committed murder in an inſurrection, *ver.* 17, 18, &c. And when they moſt ungratefully preferred that ſeditious murderer before him who had given life to ſo many among them, *Pilate* was diſpoſed ſtill to favour him, by reaſon of an admonition he received from his wife (at this very inſtant, when he was ſet down again in the Judgment-ſeat) to have nothing to do in the condemnation of ſo righteous a perſon; for ſhe had *ſuffered ſo many things,* and been diſturbed with ſuch troubleſome thoughts in her ſleep about him, that ſhe was confident he would ſuffer much if he were guilty of his death, xxvii. *Matth.* 19. This ſtartled him ſo much, that he laboured more than before to ſet him at liberty. He asked *them* indeed, which was unbecoming a Judge, *what he ſhould do with Jeſus which is called* CHRIST (*ver.* 22.) as if his accuſers, not He, were to determine his puniſhment: But yet he askt them again and again, no leſs than three times, *Why, what evil hath he done?* for he proteſted he found no cauſe

cauſe of death in him, xxvii. *Matth.* 23. xxiii. *Luke* 22. In which laſt place, you may read, that having declared his innocence, he next of all contrived how to appeaſe their blind rage, only by giving him the chaſtiſement of ſcourging. Which S. *John* tells us was beſtowed on him, xix. *John* 1. and that the ſouldiers alſo added ſome ridiculous enſigns of royalty, which they put upon him to expoſe him to the greater ſcorn, and made a mock-proclamation, ſaying, *Hail King of the Jews*, *ver.* 2, 3. This *Pilate* imagined would have given ſatisfaction to their wrath; and *therefore went forth again* (*ver.* 4.) to let them *know that he found no fault in him.* But they might ſee that he had rendred him ſo contemptible, that no body hereafter would follow him as their King. For he brought him forth in that ridiculous dreſs into which the ſouldiers had put him (*ver.* 5.) and bid them look upon him, whether he was not deſpicable enough. That ſeems to be the meaning of thoſe words that follow, *Behold the man.* See what a poor deſpicable perſon they have made him. You need not fear that ſuch a man will do you any harm; for there is nothing of royal Majeſty in him, more than this which you laugh at.

But they would not be content with this contempt which was put upon him; their malice was implacable, and nothing would ſuffice them but to have him crucified. Which at the inſtigation of the Prieſts, was demanded by the rabble, who bawled as loud as ever they could, *ſaying, Crucifie him, crucifie him, ver.* 6. As much as to ſay, Go on ſir, thou haſt begun well, proceed to finiſh the execution. For *ſcourging* uſed to go before *Crucifixion*, as S. *Hierom* obſerves upon xxvii. of S. *Matthew*. *It was appointed by the Roman Laws, that they who were crucified ſhould firſt be ſcourged.* The *Jews* themſelves who were taken in the ſiege of *Jeruſalem* by *Titus* (five hundred commonly every day, ſometimes more) were firſt miſerably laſht, and as it were, crucified before-hand with great torments, and then faſtned to a croſs over againſt the wall of the City, as *Joſephus* * relates in his Book of the *Jewiſh* war. By a juſt judgment of God they themſelves ſuffered that from the *Romans*, which they had made our Saviour ſuffer unjuſtly by the ſame hands. For they never left their yelling againſt him, and beſeeching the Governour not to leave off thus; till *Pilate* bid

* *Lib.* 6. *c.* 12.

bid them do the reſt themſelves if they would, for he had rather it ſhould be their act than his: *Take ye him, ſaith he, and crucifie him; for I find no fault in him, ver.* 6. One would think that the very manner of this ſpeech was a ſufficient declaration of the Governours mind; beſide that he again repeats it, that he ſaw no pretence for the putting him to death. But yet they continue to preſs him with an obſtinate violence to gratifie their deſires. And ſince they ſaw there was no good to be done, as we ſay, in this way wherein they had hitherto proſecuted him; they form a new endictment againſt him: and tell *Pilate* (*ver.* 7.) that if he could not find him guilty of death, according to the *Roman* Laws, yet *by their Law he ought to die, becauſe he made himſelf the Son of God.*

This was to make a new Proceſs againſt him, and to forſake the former endictment, which accuſed him of Treaſon againſt *Cæſar.* Now they make him guilty of Treaſon againſt Almighty God, and ſeem to lay hold of a Licence which *Pilate* had given them before, xviii. *John* 31. to *take him and judge him according to their Law*, which pronounced the ſentence of

death upon him. But, as they add there, they had no power remaining among them to execute ſuch a ſentence: and therefore implore his favour to help them out, and to *puniſh* capitally this high crime of blaſphemy, which, as things ſtood, they could only *condemn*. And though they might be willing enough to underſtand his words juſt now ſpoken (when he ſaid, *Take ye him, and crucifie him*) to be really meant for an enlargement of his former grant, and to give them liberty to execute their own ſentence: yet it was more than they could do, they muſt be beholden to his power for it. They were extremely deſirous, it appears by the ſtory, to have him crucified, for his greater diſgrace; but this was a puniſhment proper only to the *Gentiles*, and never uſed among the *Jews*: and therefore that they might neither act againſt the cuſtoms of their Country, nor yet let him eſcape that ignominious puniſhment, they continue to beg of *Pilate* that he would pronounce the ſentence of crucifixion upon him, and then command his ſouldiers to ſee it executed; for ſaying that he was *the Son of God*.

When *Pilate* therefore heard this (xix. *John* 8.) that he called himſelf the *Son of God*

God (which the *Jews* took for blaſphemy) it put him into a greater fear than ever. He imagining, I ſuppoſe, according to the opinion of the *Gentiles*, that he might poſſibly be ſome Son of *Jupiter* or *Apollo*, or ſome other of their Deities. And therefore he went back again into the Palace (*ver.* 9.) and askt our Saviour, *Whence art thou?* To which our Saviour replied nothing: either becauſe he was unworthy to hear, or uncapable to underſtand ſo weighty a Truth. This put him into ſome indignation, for he asked him again with arrogance enough (*ver.* 10.) *Doſt thou not ſpeak to me? knoweſt thou not who I am? and that I have power either to crucifie thee, or releaſe thee,* which I pleaſe? To which he received ſuch an anſwer (*ver.* 11.) as ſatisfied him, that whatſoever power he had, he ſhould abuſe it, though not ſo much as the *Jews* did theirs, if he imployed it to his condemnation. For *from thenceforth* (*ver.* 12.) he laboured more than before to releaſe *him*, whoſe innocence, modeſty, conſtancy, and contempt of death were ſo apparent. But being told that if he did, it would be in effect to declare himſelf *Cæſars* enemy, as you read in the ſame verſe; He had not the courage to befriend our Saviour any longer,

but reſolves at laſt to ſacrifice him to their rage, that he might ſave himſelf. For the very ſuſpicion of a crime, he knew, had been the ruine of divers perſons with *Tiberius*; who would not want informers, he imagined, of what was now ſaid. He thought it better therefore by the condemnation of an innocent perſon (ſuch are the counſels of worldly wiſdom) to preſerve his intereſt in the Emperor, and in the *Jews*, and perchance prevent a popular tumult, than hazard the loſs of their favour and of the publick peace, by preſerving one who was poor and mean, and for whoſe death he was not like to be called to any account, nor incur any danger.

But yet (ſo pure and free from all ſpot was this Lamb of God) he would not pronounce the ſentence againſt him, till he had firſt, in as publick a manner, pronounced him innocent, and waſhed his hands of his bloud. For *he took water*, ſays S. *Matthew* xxvii. 24. *and waſhed his hands before the multitude, ſaying, I am innocent of the bloud of this juſt perſon; ſee ye to it.* This very WATER, as well as the other, I have mentioned, was a witneſs to *Jeſus*, that his very Judge thought him

him guiltleſs, though he had openly confeſſed himſelf to be the Son of God. If it had been left to his free choice, he ſhould have been acquitted, even by him that condemned him: He had ſuch a regret in his mind, at that very time when he brought him forth to paſs the ſentence upon him, that he tries again if he could move thoſe obdurate hearts from their cruel reſolution; ſaying, (xix. *John* 13, 14.) *Behold your King.* That is, ſay what you will, this is your King, whom I am going, becauſe you will not elſe be ſatisfied, to condemn. Or elſe, this is ſpoken by way of upbraiding and deriſion, that they ſhould make ſuch a-do about ſo poor a man as this; who had no power to do any harm if he had a mind. Why ſhould they deſire ſo eagerly and impatiently to be rid of him? If he was their King, how could they anſwer it? if he were not, what hurt could he do? But the former ſeems to be the ſence of his words: for the *Jews* turned away their heads, and *cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucifie him, ver.* 15. As much as to ſay, This is none of our King, we have nothing to do with him: And therefore they would not have him trouble himſelf about their affairs any further, than only to order him

to

to be crucified. Let him not be ſo much concerned for them, or for their King; they would look to themſelves (as he had bidden them) and be content to bear all the blame, if their King were crucified. They did not deſire any of the guilt ſhould light upon him. No, for their part they declare they will perfectly acquit him, and take all upon themſelves and theirs. So *all the People anſwered and ſaid, His blood be on us, and on our Children:* xxvii. Matth. 25.

And yet, as if he would vie with them in pertinacious reſolution (ſo ſenſible he was of his innocence) he deſires them once more, to conſider of the buſineſs, and not thus raſhly deſtroy him whom they ought to preſerve. What, ſays he, *Shall I crucifie your King?* xix. Joh. 15. To which the chief Prieſts immediately returned ſuch an anſwer as ſtopt his mouth, and made him not dare to ſpeak one word more in his behalf. And indeed it is a great wonder he had ſaid ſo much, conſidering his natural diſpoſition; which, if we may believe *Philo**, was ſo fierce and cruel, that he little regarded any body; or cared what crimes he committed. Strange! that he ſhould be ſo nice and tender in this point:

* *Legation. ad Caium.*

So

So extremely unwilling to paſs ſentence on our Saviour (a Man that had not one friend appeared for him) that nothing could make him do it, till they reminded him of his duty to his Maſter, ſaying, *We have* (i. e. acknowledge) *no King but Cæſar. Then*, as it follows in the very next words, verſ. 16. *delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified.* When he heard they ſtill obſtinately pretended reſpect to *Cæſar*, and would have *him* to be concerned in the caſe; he thought it was time to make an end, and give ſentence that their new King ſhould be crucified. For this at laſt was the crime, for which he muſt ſuffer, verſ. 19. *Pilate wrote a title* (ſhowing the cauſe of his death) *and put it on the Croſs. And the Writing was*, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. Which *Pilate* knew was falſe, in the ſence wherein they meant it, a King oppoſite to *Cæſar*: and therefore the words were ſo contrived that he might ſtill expreſs the opinion he had of him, and yet ſatisfie *Cæſar* too. To the very laſt he would give teſtimony to the innocence of *Jeſus*, as far as he durſt: and even then proclaimed him their King in ſeveral Languages (an Omen of the proclaiming it ſhortly in all Countries) to their everlaſting reproach; when he hung

hung upon an infamous Gibbet. And therefore they were not yet ſatisfied; becauſe they ſaw themſelves plainly indited by this Title, in the face of the World; as the Murderers of their KING. Which made them renew their Petitions to *Pilate* that he would alter the Inſcription; and not write *The King of the Jews, but that he ſaid, I am King of the Jews*, verſ. 21. But now *Pilate* grew as obſtinate as they, and gave them this ſhort anſwer, verſ. 22. *What I have written, I have written.* That is, content your ſelves; for the firſt writing ſhall ſtand, let the World make what they can of it. And there is no queſtion but there was a Divine Providence in the buſineſs, that the cauſe of his death ſhould be ſo expreſſed, as that the *Jews* ſhould be openly condemned and *Jeſus* ſtill cleared by *Pilate*; even after he had not only given ſentence againſt him, but ordered it to be put in execution. All things concurred to juſtifie him when his BLOUD was ſhed. Which this very Title declared was upon this account, to teſtifie that he was *their KING*: and told the World withall, that in the judgment of him who was his Judge, He was no deceiver, when he affirmed that he was *their KING*; but the *Jews*, villainous Traytors, who had crucified

fied that Perſon whom they ought to have honoured and obeyed.

XIV. For which the terrible vengeance of God followed them; and never left them till they had their own wiſh. His BLOUD was required at their hands, and at the hands of their Poſterity. For they never thrive from that time forward: but declined more and more, till about Forty Years after, their City was beſieged by thoſe whom they had importuned to crucify our Saviour; multitudes of them were crucified (as I told you before) in the face of all their Brethren; far greater numbers were famiſht; *Jeruſalem* and the Temple at laſt deſtroyed; the People of the Nation baniſhed; and their Children became Vagabonds, even to this day. For it was not very long, before thoſe very Men, who (when they ſaid thoſe words, *We have no King, but Cæſar*) in the ſame breath had for ever renounced their CHRIST, and pronounced themſelves Rebels, if they were not obedient to *Cæſar*; took up arms to deliver themſelves from their ſubjection to him, whom they really hated, though, now, to ſerve a turn, they courted and flattered. They who had rejected their *true CHRIST* and KING by whom they might have

have been reſtored to true liberty, were ready upon all occaſions to run after thoſe *falſe CHRISTS* (of whom our Saviour propheſied, xxiv. *Matth.* 5. 24.) who by the promiſes of a falſe liberty, led them into perdition. They could never be quiet till they had undone themſelves, by provoking the only King whom they pretended to reverence, to be the Inſtrument of our Saviour, to make them the vileſt ſlaves, and the moſt miſerable wretches upon the face of the Earth. S. *John* lived to ſee the day of Jeſus his COMING WITH POWER to execute Judgment upon them; and we ſee their wiſh ſtill more and more accompliſhed upon their Children. Who, as they never yet ſolemnly indeavoured to wipe off the guilt of his BLOUD from them, by acknowledging the crime of their Fore-fathers (as the manner of former times was, we ſee in the examples of *Nehemiah*, and *Daniel*) ſo they continue to taſte of the bitter fruits of this execrable Treaſon againſt their Soveraign Lord and King, CHRIST JESUS. By which you may ſee, that his BLOUD both upon the *Croſs* and upon their *Heads* (by the heavy guilt it loaded them withall) is very fitly here alledged by S. *John*, as a great WITNESS that He was ſent of God as his *only Son.*

Son. For *Pontius Pilate* himſelf did not wholly eſcape, but ſome of it lighted alſo upon his Head. Though he was not ſo guilty, our Saviour confeſſed, as they who purſued him out of hatred, whereas he having no unkindneſs for him, delivered him to be crucified, only out of fear: yet he felt the weight of this crime, and was oppreſſed himſelf, as our Saviour had been, by falſe accuſations which the *Samaritans* brought againſt him. Whereupon he was deprived of the Government of *Judæa* by *Vitellius* then Preſident of *Syria*. And having loſt the authority, which he abuſed in condemning our Saviour; he was required to go to *Rome*, and there anſwer the crimes that ſhould be objected to him. There indeed he found *Tiberius* dead; but he did not live long after him. For he fell into ſo diſtreſſed a condition, that, about the third year of the ſucceeding Emperor *Caius*, ἐξ ἀνάγκης (as *Euſebius* his word is*) he was conſtrained, either by the grievous afflictions he endured, or by the command of *Cæſar* (which was an uſual thing) to become his own Executioner, and puniſh himſelf with Death for all the crimes he had committed.

**L.11.Hiſt. Eccl. c.7.*

But

But I ſhall not purſue either his or their ſtory any further; it being time to put an end to this Argument, which I ſhall conclude with theſe *Two* obſervations.

1. *Firſt,* That after our Saviour was dead, one of the ſouldiers pierced his ſide with his ſpear, *and forthwith came there-out WATER and BLOUD,* as this very Apoſtle hath recorded in the Chapter ſo often mentioned, xix. *John* 34. Now ſome have from hence imagined, that he being the only Evangeliſt that takes any notice of this, and ſetting a particular remark upon it, as a thing that *he ſaw and bears witneſs of, ver.* 35. it is moſt likely he hath ſome reſpect to that paſſage in his Goſpel, and to the *Water* and *Bloud* there mentioned, when he ſpeaks of the witneſs of WATER and BLOUD here in this Epiſtle. For the Water and Bloud which flowed out of his ſide, were an argument of the truth of his humanity, which ſome wild Hereticks then denied, and teſtified alſo that he was truly dead, and not merely in appearance.

But it muſt be obſerved that S. *John* is not here proving *Jeſus* Chriſt to be a true man,

man, conſiſting of Body and Soul like ours, and that this Body and Soul were ſo ſeparated, that he was really dead: but ſomething far greater and more excellent; *viz.* that he was God's Son: which the *Water* and *Bloud* that came out of his ſide were no competent argument to prove. That *Water* and *Bloud* therefore, if they have any relation to theſe *Witneſſes* here mentioned, were only emblems. and adumbrations of theſe two grand Proofs of our Saviours being the CHRIST, *viz.* his PURITY and innocence which appeared in his whole preaching and life, to which the *Water* bears a reſemblance; and his conſtant confeſſion of the truth even unto the DEATH, which was lively repreſented by that *Bloud.* Theſe two flowed from him with ſuch force, that they have overſpread the world with his Faith; and *the knowledge of the glory of the Lord hath covered the Earth, even like to the waters which cover the Sea.*

2. The *ſecond* Obſervation is, That they who by apoſtaſie from the Faith of *Jeſus*, denied him to be *the CHRIST* after they had acknowledged it, are ſaid to *tread under foot the Son of God*, and to *count his BLOUD an unholy thing*, x. *Heb.* 29.

Which expreſſion could not be juſtified, if the Apoſtles had not lookt upon his *Bloud* as an unreproveable Witneſs to him. For the meaning is, that thoſe men who fell back to their old Religion again, and deſerted Chriſtianity, made nothing of the Teſtimony which God had given of his Son. As for his *Reſurrection* they did not give any credit to that, though ſo ſtrongly atteſted, but *TROD UNDER FOOT the Son of God*, as if he lay ſtill in his grave: and as for his *Bloud* which was ſhed at his *Death*, they look'd upon that as if it were but COMMON BLOUD (ſo the word UNHOLY may be taken) or rather as if it were the *bloud* of a malefactor, which may be properly called *impure* and *unholy*. Which is the reaſon that he ſays they ſhall be judged worthy of *ſorer puniſhment* than the contemners of *Moſes*; becauſe theſe men in effect made *Jeſus* (who was infinitely greater than He) to be a mere Impoſtor, a falſe Prophet, and a Blaſphemer, who had done things worthy of the vileſt death. They juſtified thoſe that murdered him, and *crucified the Son of God afreſh* (as it is in a parallel place, vi. *Hebr.* 6.) by diſowning him and denying that he was *the CHRIST*. For this was to acknowledge that he was juſtly

put

put to death, for taking upon him that office: and that if he were upon Earth again, they ſaw no reaſon why they ſhould not treat him, as the *Jews* had done. This was the ſence of every Chriſtians apoſtaſie; it renewed the charge of impoſture againſt *Jeſus*, and *put him*, as the Apoſtle there ſpeaks, *to open ſhame*. They did as bad as publickly declare him to be a deceiver; and that he deſerved to loſe his life in that infamous manner wherein he ſuffered upon the Croſs. For which cauſe ſuch vilifiers of *Jeſus* deſerved to partake in that *judgment and fiery indignation*, which he ſays was ready *to devour the adverſaries* (*ver.* 27.) that is, thoſe who actually crucified Chriſt, and now perſecuted his ſervants: for they had his *BLOUD* in the ſame contempt, and made no more of it, than of the bloud of one of the Thieves that were crucified with him.

Now from hence it follows that his BLOUD teſtified his innocence (as I have ſhown) and was look'd upon by others as well as by S. *John* to be a witneſs that he was the Son of God. Elſe they could not have been guilty of ſo great a crime, and faln under ſuch an heavy pu-

niſhment, who deſpiſed his *Bloud*, and were no more moved by it than if it had been common, like the bloud of other men; nay, relinquiſhed him, as if his bloud had been profane, like that of the malefactors who ſuffered with him. This was their condemnation, that they caſt ſuch a vile reflection on that bloud, which heretofore they thought ſo powerful, that *thereby they were SANCTIFIED*; that is, perſwaded to devote themſelves to his ſervice, as the only means to obtain remiſſion of their ſins, which they had by his Bloud. This is a ſign that they look'd upon it once, not only as a thing *moſt ſacred*, but alſo moſt *powerful* to make men believe in *Jeſus*. And this increaſed the ſin and guilt of diſhonouring his Bloud by Apoſtaſie; becauſe it was of great authority and force to draw men to the Faith, and to preſerve them in it: which, by forſaking the Faith it confirmed, they made to be of no efficacy, nor conſideration at all.

Moſes his Covenant and Law were ſealed only *by the bloud of Bulls and Goats*, and yet thoſe men ſuffered death without mercy, as the Apoſtle here obſerves, who either fell away to other gods, or did any thing preſumptuouſly in contempt of his precepts.

precepts. By which we may judge, ſays he, what they are like to ſuffer (a much ſorer puniſhment ſure) who renounce the Chriſtian Religion, which was confirmed by a much greater perſon, and by a more noble bloud, even by the bloud of the Mediator of this better Covenant. Who did more than *Moſes* ever thought of to atteſt what he delivered, and to prove that he came from God, and that all his promiſes ſhould be made good (for he ſealed them with his own bloud) and therefore might juſtly expect that man ſhould prove more faithful to him, and remain firmer in his obedience; at leaſt not be ſo preſumptuous as to deſpiſe him by reproaching his precious Bloud. Now if his *Bloud* was not an argument to induce men to believe, and to continue in the ſtate of Chriſtianity; they could not be charged with ſuch diſreſpect to it, when they left this Religion, nor be puniſhed for the undervaluing or rather ſcorning that which was of no force to tye them to the Faith. But if they were guilty of great contempt of it, and were to ſuffer ſorely, extream ſorely upon this account, that they gave no more reverence to his bloud, then we ought to conclude the Apoſtles thought it of great efficacy to en-

gage their belief, and make them conſtantly adhere to Chriſt, by the witneſs that it bare to him. Which teſtimony, together with the reſt, thoſe apoſtates plainly rejecting, they became liable to a far heavier condemnation than any formerly could fall into, for affronting *Chriſt*, and all thoſe who were his *Witneſſes*. In ſhort, they who did not look upon his bloud as *Holy*, muſt condemn him for a Malefactor. But they that did confeſs the ſacredneſs of it (which appears many ways) muſt needs acknowledge him not to have been a Criminal, as the *Jews* pretended, but, the *Son of God*, as at his death he profeſſed himſelf.

A PRAYER.

I DO again acknowledge thee, O bleſſed Jeſus, *to be the Son of God moſt High. I behold thy Glory ſhining through the blackeſt cloud of thy ſhameful ſufferings. Then thou appeareſt to be the choſen of God, even when thou waſt ſcorned and rejected of men. Great was the ſplendour of thy Majeſty, under the mockery*

mockery of a Crown *of* Thorns, *and under the reproach of the* Croſs *it ſelf. And great was thy* Love, O *thou* Lover *of* Souls, *who wouldſt ſhed thy own moſt precious* Bloud *to work and confirm thy* Faith *in our hearts, that believing on thee, we might have life through thy* Name. O *how expenſive was thy* Love, *which never thought it had done enough, till thou hadſt aſſured our hearts, by giving thy ſelf for us! How infinitely are we indebted to thee, who haſt ſo dearly purchaſed our eternal joy, with thy moſt bitter ſorrows! I ought to have the greater regard to all that thou haſt ſaid, either concerning thy ſelf, or concerning the obedience I owe thee, or the happineſs thou haſt promiſed me; becauſe thou haſt ſealed all in ſo ſacred a manner, and choſen to die that thou mighteſt bear witneſs to thy* Truth.

For *this end thou cameſt into the world, and haſt honoured thy ſelf with the* Name *of the* True and faithful witneſs, the beginning of the Creation of God; *who haſt ſhown us the path of life, by thy bloudy and moſt ignominious death.* O *that none of us who are called by thy* Name *may ever prove ſo baſe and unworthy, ſo ungrateful and diſreſpectful to thee, ſo inſenſible or forgetful of thine amazing goodneſs, as to forſake that*

courſe which thou thy ſelf haſt begun, and into which thou haſt led us by thine own example. Let none of us prove unlike thee who art the beginner and the finiſher of our Faith. *Let us never degenerate from the Original from whence we come; nor diſhonour the very Author of what we are, by actions unworthy of his children. But be pleaſed graciouſly both to excite and aſſiſt our pious endeavours to follow thee, and to witneſs a good confeſſion, as thou haſt done, at leaſt in our lives and converſation. That they may teſtifie to all how much we reverence thee, by our obſervance of thy commands; and juſtifie the truth of thy Word, that thy yoke is eaſie and thy burden light, by our chearful, free and ready obſervance of them. And if thou wilt have us to witneſs a good confeſſion alſo by our bloud, or by parting with any thing that is as dear unto us, for thy names ſake; O that we may then imitate thee, the true and faithful witneſs, by continuing faithful to thee unto death. Let no Soul of us ever faint in our mind, much leſs draw back for fear of any thing that may befall us: But ſtill go on, and couragiouſly meet whatſoever oppoſes us in our way to Heaven. Help us to* ſtand faſt in the Faith, *to* quit our ſelves like men, *and* to be ſtrong, *as becomes thy faithful ſervants and ſouldiers, who have vowed to be true to thee unto our lives end.*

O

O *Bleſſed* Jeſus, *who can think that he does or endures too much for thee? Who can complain of thy ſervice, or repine at the ſufferings it may require? When he thinks of thy labour and pains to ſecure our hope in* God *of an eternal redemption from all miſeries and troubles, and from all ſin the cauſe of them, by ſhedding thy own moſt holy bloud? We are unworthy to bear the Name of thy ſervants, if we ſhould be ſo ungrateful to thy memory, as not to celebrate that love with perpetual praiſes and thankſgivings. And how fearfully ſhall we reproach our ſelves if we continue to commemorate it, and yet grudge to deny any thing for thy ſake, or behave our ſelves as if we would renew thy ſufferings by our continued ſins? Far be it from any of us to think any thing ſo dear to us as* Truth *and* Righteouſneſs; *that holy* Truth *which thou haſt delivered to us. O that we may read with ſuch an affection the whole hiſtory of thy love, and all the* Laws *thou haſt left to govern us, and the gracious grants thou haſt made us; as if we ſaw them written in thy moſt precious bloud: By which thou haſt teſtified the greatneſs and ſincerity of thy love, and aſſured us of the truth of thy Word, and conſecrated thy ſelf alſo to be a merciful and faithful* High Prieſt; *who canſt have compaſſion on us, and ever*

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ſuccour and relieve us when we are tempted as thou waſt. And may we be ſo ſenſibly affected herewith, as to depend on thy interceſſion with the ſtronger Faith; and with greater care and diligence tread in thoſe ſteps which thou haſt in ſuch a manner markt out to us; and perſiſt in them ſo ſtedfaſtly, that none of the terrors of this world may make us ſtep aſide, and turn from thy Commandments.

Give us grace, O *Bleſſed* Lord, *in the worſt condition, to expreſs that reſolution, that undaunted reſolution, that conſtancy, that confidence in* God, *that Zeal for his honour and glory, that charity towards our enemies, that humble reſignation, and that patient meekneſs, which appeared in thee under thy greateſt ſufferings. Arm us with the very ſame mind and ſpirit, which we ſee in thy ſelf. That we who believe in a Saviour who abaſed and humbled himſelf ſo low, who was ſo content to be poor and little regarded, to bear all the ſlanders and ſcorn, as well as the cruel torments which the malice of men could inflict upon him; may not be proud and inſolent, covetous and ambitious, impatient of pain, or a little diſparagement: but conſtantly endeavouring to conform our ſelves to thy glorious pattern which we have before us,*

may

may rejoyce in that faithful ſaying, That if we be dead with thee, we ſhall alſo live with thee; if we ſuffer, we ſhall alſo reign with thee. *Amen.*

Now unto the faithful Witneſs, the firſt-begotten from the dead, and the Prince of the Kings of the Earth: Unto him that loved us and waſhed us from our ſins in his own Bloud, and hath made us Kings and Prieſts unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. *Amen.*

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Concerning the Third *Witneſs upon Earth the* SPIRIT.

THere is one *Witneſs* more that remains ſtill to be examined, whoſe teſtimony was notorious and very well known, for it was upon the Earth; *viz.* that of the SPIRIT. In the *ſixth* verſe S. *John* brings it in after the other two, I have now treated of; though in the *eighth* Verſe it be ſet before them. And there he adds this illuſtrious character of it, which is not given to the two former, *it is the* SPIRIT *that beareth witneſs, becauſe the* SPIRIT *is the* TRUTH. Which is not to be underſtood as if the other two were not *Witneſſes*, for they are called ſo expreſly in this *eighth* Verſe; or as if they were not *truth*, for I have abundantly proved that they are: But this mark is ſet upon the SPIRIT, to denote it to be the moſt eminent

nent Witneſs of the Three. *The* witneſs, or *that* Witneſs; that which excels the other two in clearneſs and notorioufneſs; that which was alwayes accounted moſt powerful to prove a truth; that againſt which nothing can be objected but with the greateſt impudence and impiety; that which adds greater ſtrength and force unto the other two, and together with them makes up a moſt compleat demonſtration. For whatſoever defect any one may think there is in the witneſs of the *Water* and of the *Bloud* alone; the SPIRIT perfectly ſupplies it, and proves beyond all doubt that a perſon who ſo lived and ſo dyed, muſt needs be the *Son of God.*

Now by the SPIRIT we are not to underſtand, either the deſcent of the Spirit of God upon our Saviour at his Baptiſm, or the pouring of it upon the Apoſtles on the Day of Pentecoſt, or any thing of like nature; for this was the Teſtimony of the HOLY GHOST, and that from *Heaven.* But we are to underſtand thereby *firſt* the *Miracles*, *Wonders* and *Signs* which were wrought by him before he dyed; and *ſecondly* his more wonderful *Reſurrection* to life again, after he was crucified, dead and buried. I will not be too con-

confident, but I think there is a plain difference, which is not obſerved, between the HOLY GHOST and the SPIRIT, in the phraſe of the New Teſtament. By the HOLY GHOST ſeems commonly to be meant, the gifts of Tongues, of Prophecy, of Knowledge, of Wiſdom, of Revelation, and ſuch like. Whereas by the SPIRIT, when it is uſed alone, or in diſtinction from the other, is generally meant, the power of Miracles, of healing Diſeaſes, caſting out Devils, feeding Multitudes with very little food, and ſuch like wonders. For we read that the *HOLY GHOST was not* given while our Saviour lived, vii. *John* 39. And yet even then the Apoſtles had the power of caſting out Devils, and healing all manner of Diſeaſes; which was a portion of that SPIRIT which our Saviour had *without meaſure*, but was not the HOLY GHOST. Thus *S. Peter* ſays our Lord was anointed with the *HOLY GHOST and with* POWER, x. Act. 38. Where by POWER is meant ſomething diſtinct from the HOLY GHOST; even that which is here called SPIRIT, a faculty of doing wonders; as the other ſignifies a faculty of knowing the heart, of declaring the mind of God, of foretelling things to come, of prophecying,

cying, and opening all the ſecrets of the Kingdom of Heaven.

And thus I am ſure it ſignifies in the Old Teſtament; where when the *SPIRIT of the Lord* is ſaid to come upon *Othniel*, iii. Judg. 9. upon *Gideon*, vi. 34. upon *Samſon*, xiii. 25. xiv. 6. (as I may have occaſion to note more largely upon another occaſion) there is nothing intended of the HOLY GHOST or any gift of declaring God's mind that was then beſtowed on them: But they were then only made valorous and couragious; and were indued with great ſtrength to atchieve wonderful things, above the power of Man. And indeed in this conſiſts one principal difference, between the HOLY GHOST and the SPIRIT; that the former conſecrated Men to the office of interpreting God's mind; but the latter did not: making them only valiant (as in thoſe three now mentioned) or fit for the Government of God's People, as in the caſe of *Saul*. All which is ſaid briefly to ſhow what we are here to underſtand by the SPIRIT, *viz.* all the wonderful things that our Lord *did*, and all that were *done* for him upon the Earth. For, whatſoever may be thought of the reſt, there is no doubt

doubt of this, that when the HOLY GHOST and the SPIRIT are thus diſtinguiſhed, as they are here by S. *John* (the one being a witneſs in *Heaven*, the other on *Earth*) SPIRIT muſt be taken in this limited and reſtrained ſignification.

I.

And firſt, I ſay, *All that he did*, as his cleanſing the poor Lepers; opening the eyes of the blind; curing of the Palſie, Bloudy-flux, and indeed all manner of ſickneſs and diſeaſe; commanding the Wind and the Sea to be obedient to him; walking upon the Water; feeding many Thouſands with a few Loaves and Fiſhes; making an hundred times more fragments than there was meat; caſting out of Devils, and raiſing of the Dead; all theſe were notable witneſſes to *Jeſus*, and hereby the SPIRIT bare record that He was the *Son of God*. The Prophet *Iſaiah* foretold that he, *being Gods beloved in whom his Soul was well pleaſed*, would appear in this manner; for God, he ſays, would *put his SPIRIT upon him*. This S. *Matthew* takes notice of, and applies to *Jeſus*, xii. 18. juſt after he had cured a Man who had his hand withered: which ſhows what he un- 12.

derſtood by the SPIRIT. And our Lord himſelf alſo expounds the meaning of it in the following Verſes. For after the recital of that Prophecy of *Iſaiah*, the Evangeliſt relates immediately how He healed a Man *poſſeſſed with a Devil, blind and dumb*, verſ. 22. which the *Phariſees* ſpitefully aſcribing to the power of the Devil, and not of God, He confutes them by this argument, that then the Devil would pull down his own Kingdom. What men of ſence, could imagine him to be ſo fooliſh? He was not yet ſo blind as the *Phariſees* were: who ought to have concluded from theſe miraculous works, (verſ. 28.) that if he *by the SPIRIT of God caſt out Devils* (as it could be by nothing elſe, according to the argument now named) then it was apparent *the Kingdom of God was come unto them*. Here he both tells us what the SPIRIT ſignifies, *viz.* ſuch a power as this of caſting out Devils; and alſo what was the end of giving the SPIRIT, *viz.* that they might know the *Meſſiah*, and his *Kingdome* was come. And whom could they take to be their KING, but he who appeared anointed with ſuch a SPIRIT, and who communicated the ſame power unto others?

For

For this was an evident demonſtration, that the voice was no empty ſound which ſaid, *Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed*; and that it was no deception, when *John* the Baptiſt thought he ſaw the SPIRIT deſcend and remain upon him. It was plain by this, that indeed he was very dear to God, and that he had a *Divine Power* reſiding and dwelling in him; which proved him to be as great as that voice proclaimed him. That there was a mighty *Power* in him, his ſworn Enemies could not deny. The very accuſation of Magick, which we find to this day in the *Jewiſh* Books, againſt him, does us this ſervice; that it is an open acknowledgment, there were ſuch miraculous things done, as are recorded in the Goſpel ſtory. Which being granted, it is apparent the power that wrought them was *Divine*, and that there was nothing of the Devil in the buſineſs; by our Saviours argument in the place now named. For how could the Devil be ſuppoſed to aſſiſt in ſuch operations, unleſs we will conceive him to have ſo little wit, as to contrive the moſt effectual way to overthrow all his own authority? The very end for which our Saviour diſpoſſeſſed Devils, and did all other

miraculous cures, was to win honour to God; whereas the Devil, in all that he doth, hath the quite contrary drift. If we ſhould ſuppoſe with the Phariſees that he hath ſometimes ſuffered himſelf to be commanded by his Copartners, it hath ever been with the ſame deſign, that cunning Gameſters have; who permit a meer bungler to beat them a ſet or two, only to draw them in to play for a greater ſtake. He never gives way to any of his Friends, or ſeems to be afraid of their authority over him, but it is to bring Men to an acknowledgment of his power; or to ſeduce them to the performance of ſome magical ſervices to him. Whereas our Saviour demanded no other reward for all his charitable Cures, but this alone; that they whom he had thus obliged, ſhould thank GOD, and give him glory, and ſin no more.

To this purpoſe *Origen* admirably diſcourſes, in the latter end of his firſt Book againſt *Celſus*. "It is ſenceleſs to think "that any of his Miracles were done by "Magick; for there never was any Ma-"gician, that called Men to the forſaking "of the Devil and all Idolatry, and per-"ſwaded them to amend their lives in "good

"good earneſt. They never inſtructed "them in the fear of God by all their won- "derful tricks; nor taught thoſe that ſaw "them *ſo to live, as thoſe that are to be tryed "and judged by God.* This is none of their "buſineſs. They neither can nor will "carry on ſuch a deſign; nor have any "thing to do with the amendment of "Mankind: being themſelves full of all "filthineſs and ſwarming with the moſt "abominable Vices. But he who by all "the wonderful things he did, called the "ſpectators to the correction of their man- "ners and the amendment of their lives; "propounded himſelf alſo, not only to his "familiar diſciples, but to all others Παράδειγμα ἀρίστου βίου, a pattern and exam- "ple of the beſt and moſt excellent life. "That ſo, both his Diſciples might be in- "ſtructed to teach Men the will of God; "and others, being taught by his Word "and manners more than by his Miracles "how to live, might have reſpect to no- "thing elſe in all they did, but how to "pleaſe God. Now if the life of Jeſus was "ſuch as this, what Man of ſence is there "that can compare him with Magicians, "and not rather believe him to be God "appearing in an humane body, ἐπ' εὐερ- "γεσίᾳ τοῦ γένους ἡμῶν, to be a benefactor

"to Mankind and beſtow the greateſt bleſ-
"ſings on us.

But, becauſe this Argument is very large, let us draw it into a narrower compaſs; and take particular notice onely of theſe two ſorts of miraculous works; *caſting out of Devils*, and *raiſing the dead*.

I. As for the former, the *caſting of Devils* out of a number of diſtracted and mad or melancholy People, whoſe depraved imaginations were oft-times furiouſly moved by the power of evil ſpirits; it is the more remarkable, becauſe it declares he had as great a power over the inviſible World, as they ſaw him have over the bodies of Men, and over the water, the winds, and things growing upon the Earth: all which yield ſome examples of his Miraculous works. Who could this be, but the Lord of Angels and Men and all other things, who commanded the Prince of the power of the Air and all his Legions, and they could not reſiſt him? Was it not an Argument that *God was with him*, as *S. Peter* ſpeaks, when no created power whatſoever could withſtand him? For you may obſerve further, (2.) That there were no kind of Devils which did not preſently give

give place, when he required them to come out. There might have been ſome colour, as *Athanaſius* well obſerves *, to ſay he caſt out Devils by *Beelzebub*, if he had not expelled all; though never ſo numerous, and never ſo outragious. The Prince of Devils might have been ſuppoſed, to have had power over the leſſer fry. But ſince it was apparent, that πᾶσα τῶν δαιμόνων μανία, all the fury and madneſs of Dæmons fled before him, at the very mention of his Name; we muſt confeſs that *our Lord and Saviour was no Dæmonaical power; but the very Son of God, the Word,* (as he ſpeaks) *the Wiſdome and the Power of the Father.* Nay, (3.) he not only expelled them himſelf, but gave his Twelve Apoſtles authority to caſt them out. Thereby ſhowing he came to deliver Men from the dominion of the Devil, in that he gave the meaneſt Men ſuch power over him. *Go ye,* ſays he, x. Matth. 7. 8. *and preach, ſaying, The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand; heal the ſick, cleanſe the lepers, raiſe the dead, caſt out Devils, freely ye have received, freely give.* This was long before they received the *HOLY GHOST*, preſently after they were called into his attendance; and therefore was a portion of the *SPIRIT*, which teſtified their *CHRIST* or *KING* was

* *De incarn. verbi, p.* 103.

not far off, but would ſhortly viſit them. For they were ſent to prepare the people for him, as *ſeventy two* Diſciples more were afterward, though with a leſs portion of the SPIRIT than the twelve Apoſtles had. For when he ſent them with the ſame commiſſion to *preach,* that the other had, we read of no other *power* given them, but *to heal the ſick* in every City, whereinto they came, x. *Luke* 9. But they were poſſeſſed with ſuch an high opinion of the power of their Maſter who ſent them, that they adventured further; and in his name *caſt out Devils,* as well as healed ſick people. For when they returned back to give him an account, they tell him, with no ſmall joy, *Lord, even the Devils are ſubject unto us through thy name, ver.* 17.

Which might well have ſuch power, though they had no particular authority given them to caſt out Devils by it, ſince it was very terrible to them (you may obſerve further (4.)) when pronounced by thoſe who were not of our Saviours company. So S. *Mark* relates, ix. 38. that S. *John* brought a report to him of a man whom they had ſeen caſting out Devils in his name, and yet was none of his follow-

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ers; for *we forbad him*, ſays he, *becauſe he followeth not us.* To which *Jeſus* replies, that there was no cauſe to prohibite him; for this muſt needs prove a convincing argument to the man himſelf, if not to others, that he was *the Chriſt*, *ver.* 39. *There is no man which ſhall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly ſpeak evil of me.* Of this ſort they ſeem to have been to whom our Saviour appeals when the *Phariſees* accuſed him of confederacy with *Beelzebub.* That's ſtrange, ſaith He, did you ever hear of a Devil caſt out in the name of any Magician? In my name there is, even by thoſe who are more related to you, than they are to me: Let them therefore determine this matter. That ſeems to be the ſence of thoſe words, xii. *Matth.* 27. *By whom then do your children caſt them out? therefore they ſhall be your Judges.* There are thoſe who are none of my Diſciples, but yours, that uſe my name for the caſting out of Devils, who immediately fly before them. What do you think of *them*; do *they* deal with *Beelzebub?* I know you will not paſs ſuch a judgment on your own diſciples, and therefore this fact of theirs condemns your partiality, and proves my Divine vertue.

Nay,

Nay, the Devils themſelves we find, (5.) were ſo aſtoniſhed at this power which they felt in his name, that thereupon they acknowledged him to be the CHRIST. For that's their meaning when they confeſſed him to be the *HOLY ONE of God*, i. *Mark* 24. And ſo S. *Luke* expounds it, iv. 41. *The Devils alſo came out of many, crying out and ſaying, Thou art the Chriſt, the Son of God.* And (6.) the moſt unprejudiced people, who could not be worſe than Devils, took this miraculous work of the *SPIRIT* to be an argument of it, xii. *Matth.* 23. *Then was brought unto him one poſſeſſed with a Devil, blind and dumb, and he healed him: inſomuch that the blind and dumb both ſpake and ſaw. And all the people were amazed, and ſaid, Is not this the Son of David?* By that name they called their KING, whom they expected with the power of working more miracles than any Prophet before had done, vii. *John* 31. And therefore (7.) when *Cornelius* and his company were deſirous to hear of S. *Peter all things that were commanded him of God*, x. *Acts* 33. he refers them to this in the firſt place (after he had mentioned his being anointed with the Holy Ghoſt and with power)

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as an argument why they ſhould believe in *Jeſus*, that *he went about doing good, and healing all that were oppreſſed of the Devil.* And he offers himſelf together with others, as *witneſſes of all things that he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jeruſalem.* Which were the more wonderful I muſt add (8.) in the laſt place, becauſe he was a perſon of ſuch mean education. Nothing like to *Moſes* in this, who was bred up in *Pharaohs* Court, and acquainted with all the learning of the *Egyptians*. But *Jeſus* was bred up privately and in an homely manner, having no advantages at all from a liberal inſtitution. Which was the cauſe that the people of his own Country, who knew how he had been trained up, *were aſtoniſhed, ſaying,* xiii. Matth. 54,55. *Whence hath this man this wiſdom, and theſe mighty works? Is not this the Carpenter's Son? is not his Mother called Mary? and his brethren James and Joſes, and Simon and Judas? And his ſiſters, are they not all with us? whence then hath this man all theſe things?* That is, do not we know him and all his kindred? How comes he to be wiſer and more powerful than they? His parentage is poor; his breeding was in a Carpenters houſe; he never learnt of any of the Doctors and Maſters in *Iſrael*; nor

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was otherways diſciplin'd than we our ſelves; where then did he learn his skill? and who gave him this power?

This was a juſt cauſe of *aſtoniſhment*, but none at all of *offence*, as S. *Matthew* in the following words, *ver.* 57. tells us it proved. That which made them ſtumble, ſhould have rather drawn them to him, and wrought faith in them; when they ſaw ſuch wonderful things done, and ſuch excellent things ſaid, by one that could not have them, unleſs it were from God. It could be no part, they might eaſily think, of the Devils craft, to diſpoſſeſs himſelf; and therefore they ought to have concluded that he was the enemy of the Devil; and indeed the deſtroyer of him, whom God promiſed to ſend into the world. And ſo they would have concluded, had not their eyes been blinded with the ſplendour and pomp of this world, and with the love of riches, and ſuch like things. Which made them readier to follow a man that by the force of arms, and their aſſiſtance, promiſed to ſubdue the *Roman* Legions, than him, who by one word ſpeaking, they ſaw could caſt out Legions of Devils. Which naughty temper of mind, is that which

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ſtill prejudices men againſt the faith, and makes their hearts indiſpoſed to receive Chriſtianity. They prefer the world before God, and love their bodies better than their ſouls: otherwiſe they would find themſelves inclined to believe in the name of Chriſt. If they conſidered what God is, what honour is due unto him, and what it is that will make a Soul truly happy, and deſired this above all other things; they would preſently ſee that none ever glorified God ſo much as our Saviour; none ſo plainly taught the world what worſhip, honour and obſervance is to be given to him; none ever ſo contrived the improvement and happineſs of our immortal Spirits: and ſo they would be diſpoſed to hearken with due reverence and ſerious attention, to what theſe *Witneſſes* ſay concerning him. Nay, did they but prudently conſult the good of their bodies only, and had reſpect not merely to their preſent ſatisfaction, but to their perpetual felicity; it would certainly provoke them to examine carefully the Teſtimony which God hath given him; becauſe he promiſes to change theſe vile bodies, and make them glorious, *by that power whereby he is able to ſubdue all things to himſelf.* And there is not the leaſt reaſon to doubt of his

power

power now that he is in Heaven, ſince it was ſo miraculous while he was here upon Earth, that He frequently raiſed the dead. Which is the ſecond thing of which I am to ſpeak a few words.

II. And there is nothing of this kind like to that of *Lazarus* his riſing to life again, after he had been dead four days, and was already ſo far putrified, as his friends thought, that they diſſwaded our Saviour from having his Tomb opened, leſt it ſhould prove offenſive and noiſom to him. For with this S. *John* concludes all that he had to ſay of our Saviours miraculous works; there being nothing that could be thought of beyond it. For it never entred into the mind of any man to think, that a perſon really dead, as *Lazarus* undoubtedly was, could be reſtored to life by any power but that which gives us life, the power of Almighty God. And therefore our Lord plainly deſigned this, as the laſt thing he could do for their ſatisfaction while he was on Earth, to prove that he was the *Son of God.* Elſe *Lazarus* had not died, but he would have gone and prevented it, as he did in many other caſes. For when he heard that *Lazarus* was ſick, he would not ſtir from the

place

place where he was, notwithſtanding the love he had both for him and for his two ſiſters. So S. *John* obſerves when he tells us, xi. *John* 5, 6. *Now Jeſus loved Martha, and her ſiſter, and Lazarus. When he had heard therefore that he was ſick, he abode two days ſtill in the ſame place where he was.* This is a ſtrange reaſon for his making no more haſte, being at a great diſtance alſo from him. One would think that he ſhould have ſaid, *THEREFORE he began his journey preſently into Judea, that he might come time enough to ſave him whom he loved.* But he reſolved the quite contrary, *becauſe the Son of God was to be glorified by this ſickneſs, ver.* 4. Therefore he ſtayed ſo long before he would move towards him, that *Lazarus* might be dead before he got to *Bethany*: and He might get more *glory* by his reſurrection, than he had done by healing ſo many ſickneſſes, and caſting out ſuch a number of Devils. For this proved that he had power not only to break, but utterly *to deſtroy the works of the Devil*, and to tread him quite under foot, who had the *power of death.*

For which reaſon he tells his Diſciples that he was glad for their ſakes that he was not there when *Lazarus* died, *to the*

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intent they might believe, ver. 15. Have their faith, that is, more confirmed in him, by ſeeing ſuch an illuſtrious miracle wrought upon *Lazarus* after he was dead, than it could have been by healing his ſickneſs, and preſerving him from death. They had ſeen many deſperate diſeaſes cured, but never any man raiſed to life after he had been ſo long dead. Some of the *Jews* indeed objected this to him, that he ought to have been ſo kind, as to have ſaved his friends life, if he had had the power which he pretended. *Could not this man,* ſay they, *which opened the eyes of the blind have cauſed that even this man ſhould not have died? ver.* 37. They do not by theſe words expreſs their Faith, but their unbelief: and upbraid him with weakneſs or want of love. The latter could not be imputed to him, for by his tears, juſt before mentioned, *ver.* 35, 36. they all obſerved how much he loved him. But from thence ſome of the company took occaſion to diſparage his power, and to ask the reſt of their neighbours, how they could believe that he had opened a blind mans eyes (as was commonly reported, Chap. ix.) when he ſuffered one, whom he loved ſo much, to want his help and periſh? If he had done the former, how

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eaſie had it been for him to do the latter? In which he failing, though his affection could not but move him to do his utmoſt for his Friend, they took it to be a demonſtration, that he was not ſuch a mighty Man as the People imagined. This perverſe reaſoning moved our Saviour very much, ſo that he *groaned again in himſelf* (*v.*38.) to ſee their deplorable obſtinacy and malice; as much as he had done before (*v.*33.) to hear their pitious lamentations which they made for the dead. Theſe mens condition was far more pitious; becauſe he foreſaw there was but little hope, that they would be moved, when they ſaw their frivolous cavil anſwered, by the Reſurrection of *Lazarus*. Which would ſhow there was good reaſon why he let him dye; that he might expreſs never the leſs love to *him*, but more to *them* and to all Mankind by reſtoring his life, which was a more Divine work by much, than to have ſaved him from Death.

To this therefore he immediately applies himſelf and bids the Siſter of the deceaſed, whoſe faith it ſeems began to ſtagger, not doubt but ſhe ſhould *ſee the glory of God*, verſ. 40. ſuch a ſtupendious inſtance, that is, of the power of God in him, as

would move many to give glory to God that ſent him. For wherein could the Majeſty of God appear more to their aſtoniſhment, than in ſuch a marvailous work as this? which when he entred upon, he firſt lift up his eyes to him and called him *Father*; on purpoſe that the People might believe he came from God and was his Son, when they ſaw him anſwer his Prayers in this manner: *verſ.* 41, 42. Where, if you read the place, you will ſee he gives this reaſon why he made a publick acknowledgment to God, for hearing him ſo often: not becauſe he doubted of his preſence with him now; but meerly that the by-ſtanders might know, by whom he did ſuch miracles, and aſcribing them to no other power but his, might believe that he had ſent him. What ſhould they believe elſe; when they heard him, after this addreſs to God, commanding *Lazarus* with *a loud voice* (expreſſing his aſſurance and authority) to come forth: and when they beheld him who could not lately move himſelf in his Bed, riſe up out of his Tomb, and walk about, not only reſtored to life, but in perfect health? This ſtruck the hearts of many of the *Jewes* who were there preſent ſo powerfully, that *they believed on him*, verſ. 45. that is, concluded

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he was more than a *Prophet*, no leſs than the *Meſſiah* himſelf. And thoſe Cavillers before mentioned, who ſtill perſiſted to maintain their infidelity by the abſurdeſt imaginations, were ſo ſtartled at it; that they went preſently and told ſome of the Great *Sanhedrim* what *Jeſus* had done; wiſhing them, I ſuppoſe, to look to themſelves, and not ſuffer theſe proceedings, *verſ.* 46. For they were ſo alarmed with this news, that a Council forthwith is called, and they enter into a ſolemn Debate what courſe to take with him; ſeeing plainly how powerful this Miracle was to win him Profelytes, and draw the People to him, *verſ.* 47. It had had that effect upon many already, as you have heard: and they were afraid it would increaſe the number of his Diſciples ſo much; that it would prove their utter ruine. For they ſay, verſ. 48. *If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him; and the Romans ſhall come and take away both our place and Nation.* That is, the People will proclaim him their King, and thereby we ſhall incur the indignation of *Cæſar*; who will ſend an Army, and cut us off, till he leave neither root nor branch (as it is, iv. *Mal.* 1.) but deſtroy both us and our Temple. That *place* they were reſolved to preſerve,

though it were with his deſtruction: whoſe death they now determine, as ſoon as ever they could catch him. For ſo their conſultation ended; firſt they decreed (*v.* 53.) that for the publick good, as they called it, He ſhould be put to death; and then that if any knew where he was (*v.* 57.) they ſhould give notice of it, that he might be apprehended in order to his trial. Thus their blind malice turned the moſt powerful means of their converſion, into the ground and reaſon of his deſtruction. For becauſe he did ſo many miracles (*v.* 47.) they did not think it fit to let him live; when-as for that very cauſe they ought to have believed on him, and thought him worthy to live eternally. For, I think theſe *Three* things are very conſiderable, wherewith I ſhall conclude this part of the *SPIRITS* teſtimony.

I. Firſt, this Miracle wrought upon *Lazarus*, was ſo evident a token, that he was the Son of God; that it had in it all the conditions, which the *Gentile* King, whom the *Jews* ſpeak of in the Book *COSRI**, requires in a prodigy, ſufficient to perſwade men to believe that God ſpeaks by him that works it. "Our mind, ſays he, "cannot be brought to think that God

* *Part.* 1. *Sect.* 8.

"enters

"enters into ſociety with fleſh and blood,
"unleſs it be by ſuch a miracle, whereby
"the nature of things is inverted: ſo that
"it appears it could not have been done by
"any power, but only by his who is the
"author of Nature, and made all the things
"we ſee, out of nothing at all. And *ſe-*
"*condly*, this miracle muſt not be wrought
"in ſecret, but, to gain belief, it muſt be
"done before the eyes of a multitude;
"who may ſee it, and be ſatisfied of the
"truth of it. And *laſtly*, diligent inquiry
"muſt be made, and it muſt be examined
"ſtrictly; that no doubt may be left in
"mens minds, but they may be fully ſa-
"tisfied it is no fancy, nor done by any
"trick or ſubtile impoſture. Now if we conſult this Hiſtory of *Lazarus*, we ſhall find there is none of theſe wanting, to ſettle the moſt doubtful mind in the belief of our Saviours Almighty power and authority. For to raiſe the Dead is a work that exceeds all natural powers. There is none that can reſtore life, as has been ſaid already, but he who at the firſt gave it. So much the *Jewes* themſelves acknowledge; who have a common ſaying, that the *Key of the Grave* is one of the *four* keys, which is kept in the hands of the Lord of the World alone. לא למלאך ולא לשרף

Neither to Angel, nor to Seraph (as the Jeruſalem *Targum* ſpeaks upon xxx. *Gen.* 22.) that is, neither to loweſt, nor the higheſt of the Celeſtial Miniſters is this power given: but it is reſerved to him onely that made them and all things elſe.

Now that our Saviour indeed raiſed a dead man, there were many witneſſes, as you heard before, from xi. Joh. 45. where it is ſaid, that *many of the Jews which came with Mary, and had ſeen theſe things which Jeſus did, believed on him.* And the fame of it was ſo great, that it drew a greater concourſe of People thither to be ſatisfied of the truth of the report. For he tells us, xii. 9. *that much People* (i. e. a multitude) *of the Jews came to that place, not for Jeſus his ſake only, but that they might ſee Lazarus alſo, whom he had raiſed from the dead.* Nay, the Phariſees, as I told you, had the news of it brought to them by ſome that were preſent, *and had ſeen the things which Jeſus did* (xi. 46.) who were curious enough, no doubt, to inquire into the buſineſs; and had ſatisfied themſelves that indeed he was dead, laid in his Grave, and continued in that ſtate till according to the courſe of Nature, he muſt begin to turn to corruption

and

and ſtink. Which was all that needed any proof; for that he was now alive their eyes were witneſſes. And therefore they could not deny this miracle, verſ. 47. But to extinguiſh the light, and take away the convincing power of it; they thought it was beſt to remove *Lazarus* out of the way, and to put him to death as well as our Saviour. For the ſight of him converted a great many, as you read xii. 10, 11. *The chief Prieſts conſulted, that they might put Lizarus alſo to death. Becauſe that by reaſon of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jeſus.* It was a thing confeſſed then, that this wonderful work had been done. There was the teſtimony of the man himſelf, and of his Siſters, and of our Saviour's Diſciples, and of *MANY of the Jews, who were come to comfort Martha and Mary concerning their Brother*, xi. 19. In ſo much that not long after, our Saviour coming to the Feaſt of the Paſſover at Jeruſalem, *Much people went forth to meet him*, and brought him in with a triumph due only to ſo great a Perſon, ſaying, *Hoſanna, bleſſed is the KING of Iſrael, that cometh in the Name of the Lord*, xii. 12. And if you would know what excited them to meet him; it was the fame of this miracle, which the eye-witneſſes of it had brought to them;

as you read there, *ver.* 17, 18. *The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raiſed him from the dead,* BARE RECORD. *For this cauſe the people alſo met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle.*

Here, it is viſible, were two Troops or Companies, both called *much people*: one of which went from *Jeruſalem* to *Bethany* to ſee *Lazarus* whom *Jeſus* had raiſed from the dead, *ver.* 9. The other met *Jeſus* the next day as he was coming from *Bethany* to *Jeruſalem*, *ver.* 12, 13. For they had been informed by thoſe who were preſent at the time when it was done, that for certain *Lazarus* was raiſed from his grave by the word of *Jeſus*; and now they were confirmed in this belief by the company that went to *Bethany* the day before to enquire of it, who teſtified to theſe that came to meet him, that they found it to be an undoubted truth, that he had been really dead and now was alive again, by no other means but thoſe words of his, *Lazarus, come forth*, which might well make them all acknowledge him to be their KING, who was come unto them *in the name of the Lord*, as appeared by

by this miraculous work which none but the hand of Heaven could effect. What heart would not be moved to bow to him, who had ſuch power over quick and dead? who could think him to be leſs than the Lord of all, who they ſaw was the Lord of life? None but proud ambitious *Phariſees*, who were afraid they ſhould loſe as much authority as he got. Theſe were more ſtartled than ever to ſee ſuch crouds of people flock after him to do him honour; and to hear them applaud him as the great *Son of David*, and follow him with their *Hoſanna's in the higheſt*. This made them deſpair of blaſting his fame, and diſcrediting him with the people, as long as he lived; and therefore they grew the more reſolved to haſten the execution of their decree againſt him, that he ſhould be put to death. For *they ſaid among themſelves*, as you read in the following words, *ver.* 19. *Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world* (that is, vaſt multitudes) *is gone after him*: followed him, that is, as their KING, notwithſtanding all that had been done to diſparage him. They are forced here to ſpeak more truth than they were aware of, that it was in vain to oppoſe him. For even when they had killed him, *they perceived* preſently

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that they prevailed nothing: but found this literally true, that indeed *the world went after him.* Men of all Nations, and not the *Jews* only, followed him zealouſly, and became his Diſciples; notwithſtanding the ſcandal of the Croſs, which they had caſt in their way to diſcourage them. Of which there immediately follows in this ſtory, an illuſtrious preſage. For ſome *Gentiles* deſiring to ſee our Saviour (*ver.* 20.) there came a voice from Heaven, upon his prayer that God would glorifie his own Name, ſaying, *I have both glorified it, and will glorifie it again*, *ver.* 28. The glory of God, that is, had appeared lately (as I have explained it before) in the raiſing of *Lazarus*, which had drawn many of the *Jews* to him; and he promiſes ſhortly to make it appear more brightly by raiſing up *Jeſus* from the dead, which would draw alſo many ſuch *Gentiles* as theſe to believe on his name.

To conclude this, that which the above named *Jewiſh* writer pretends in favour of *Moſes*, that he appeared and did his wonders in an age when the world was full of wiſdom and knowledge, is a great deal truer of our bleſſed Saviour. For as he rightly notes * that *Learning ſtill went along*

* *Sepher Coſri Par.* 1. *Sect.* 63.

along with the Monarchies; ſo it never was at a greater height than in the greateſt Empire, that of the *Romans*; and in the higheſt pitch of that Empire, when our Saviour appeared. Upon which account there cannot be any ſuſpicion of fraud in this or the reſt of our Saviours miracles, which were not wrought in an ignorant age, nor in an obſcure and barbarous Nation, nor in ſome blind corner of the Country; but openly, near a famous City, (for *Bethany* was hard by *Jeruſalem*) where there were profeſſors of wiſdom; and in a time when men could eaſily diſtinguiſh between a real miracle and a mere deluſion. This therefore ought to have opened their eyes to ſee who he was, whoſe miraculous works they could not but ſee. And it is juſtly mentioned to their eternal reproach, in the concluſion of this ſtory, xii. *John* 37. that *though he had done ſo many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him.* For they could not with any colour aſcribe them to any power but that of Gods; who hereby told *them* what the voice from Heaven told *him*, that *this was his beloved Son in whom he was well pleaſed.*

II. And truly there can no good reaſon be

be given (which is the *ſecond* thing that I told you ſhould be conſidered) why the Apoſtles ſhould ſpend ſo great a part of the ſhort Hiſtory they have left of his Life, in relating his miraculous works, if they had not both known them to be evident and notorious things, which all the Country could witneſs, and likewiſe eſteemed them mighty demonſtrations, that he was the *Son of God.* Why elſe are they ſo large in deſcribing his cures of ſeveral ſorts, with the manner of them; if they were not ſure that they could not be contradicted; and if they did not deſire they ſhould be carefully heeded; and concluded likewiſe that if they were, men would acknowledge him to be the CHRIST, whom God had ſanctified and ſent into the world to declare his will to them? Which belief, if it were once rooted deeply in their hearts, the Apoſtles knew very well would irreſiſtibly conſtrain them, to be obedient to him in every thing. This is that which gives his words ſuch authority, which makes them ſink into our hearts, and poſſeſſes them of our very Souls, and turns all other opinions and perſwaſions, which are inconſiſtent with them, out of doors; a belief that our Creator ſpeaks unto us by his mouth.

They

They were well aware, that it was no eaſie thing to perſwade the world of this, but that men might juſtly doubt of ſo ſtrange a report. "For there is ſuch a vaſt "diſtance between God and us (as the *Jews* "make that *Gentile* King *Coſar* diſcourſe, "in the forementionʼd Book called after "his Name) that a man will be apt to "think the Majeſty of Heaven will not "enter into ſuch familiarity and friendſhip "with fleſh and bloud, as to talk with "them. Before we can believe this, ſays "He, we muſt ſee prodigies, and mi-"racles, and behold the courſe of nature "inverted, by ſuch aſtoniſhing works, as "can be done by none but him that created "all things. And it is well, if after all "this, the mind of man will reſt ſatisfied, "that the Lord of the World, the Lord "of the Sun, and Moon, and Stars, the "Lord of Angels as well as all inferiour "Creatures, will have ſociety with ſuch "vile clay, ſuch contemptible dirt as we "are. And therefore as the *Jew* in that Diſcourſe with him declares how God demonſtrated his preſence with *Moſes* by mighty miracles, ſeen by all the people, and by their enemies too; which were the fitteſt argument for God to uſe, far

beyond

beyond the little reaſonings and diſputings of Philoſophers: even ſo the Apoſtles prove to us that God was in our Saviour, and that we ought to believe what he ſays of himſelf, or concerning us, by enumerating many of the mighty wonders which he did in the midſt of the people; wonders that amazed all beholders, and of which they could give no account, but that God was with him, and ſpake by him as his Son; elſe he could not have done thoſe things which ſo much exceeded all the power of Creatures, nay, all that his own power had wrought for the honour of his ſervant *Moſes*. It was unreaſonable that they ſhould in thoſe days ask any greater tokens of a Divine authority; and when they did, our Saviour told them they ſhould have none but the ſign of the Prophet *Jonas*, that is, his Reſurrection, of which I ſhall ſpeak preſently. And it is as unreaſonable in us now, to expect any thing ſhould be better atteſted than this truth, That our Saviour did all thoſe things which the Apoſtles have recorded. We have them reported from thoſe that ſaw them, and that had all opportunities to examine them, from thoſe that beheld more of them than they could number; men of great fidelity and admi-

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rable vertue; men that had no intereſt ſo great as this, to declare the truth for the good of mankind, whatſoever they loſt by it. Unleſs we will demand that Chriſt ſhould come again in every Age, and alſo work his wonders in every Nation, in every place, before every particular mans eyes; we can have no better aſſurance than we have of theſe things. Now how abſurdly unreaſonable is he who will not be ſatisfied without ſuch a new deſcent of our bleſſed Saviour from Heaven continually repeated; and unleſs he may ſee him crucified afreſh before his eyes? For men may as well disbelieve that part of the ſtory as all the reſt, and require that they may ſee all thoſe barbarous cruelties and indignities which we read of, acted over again upon our Saviour perpetually, to the end of the World. The very mention of which as it is horrible, ſo ſhould it be done, it would deſtroy the very nature of faith: which is the receiving of ſomething upon report. And that is one ſure way of conveying the notice of things to us, which we could not otherwiſe know. And things ſo made known, if the Witneſſes be good, are accounted by all mankind to be as ſufficient a ground to proceed upon, in the moſt conſiderable actions of

humane

humane life, as the knowledge of them by ſeeing, feeling, and by the reſt of our ſenſes is.

Let us therefore receive the Teſtimony of the Apoſtles of our Lord; ſeeing there is no exception (as you may hear more before I have done) that lies againſt their perſons, with any ſhadow or colour of reaſon. Let us perſwade our ſelves that this is a true Hiſtory which they have written, and then we have no faculty of diſcourſing, if we cannot conclude who our Saviour was. He could not poſſibly have done ſuch things, as the blind man well argued, when his eyes were opened by him, ix. *John* 31, 33. *if he had been a ſinner*: that is, a deceiver, and not authorized by God to come in his Name. If he had been a mere pretender to this dignity, God would not have honoured him on this faſhion, nor have given countenance to a lye, by as great miracles as can be wrought for the proof of any Truth. He would not have deprived himſelf of all means to declare his will to us, as he muſt have done, if he had ſuffered ſuch a vaſt number of miracles to be wrought by a deceiver for three years together, and given the moſt honeſt-hearted men no means to

diſcover

diſcover the cheat. We cannot believe him to be wiſe, and to have a care to preſerve his own authority, and to ſupport his government, and not think that he would ſome way or other have controuled the deſignes of a perſon of ſuch high pretences, if he had oppoſed *Him*, and come without his conſent, as his only begotten Son, into the world. In brief, if all theſe things be true which are reported, then our Saviour was *God manifeſted in our fleſh*; and you know what regard and reverence is due to ſuch a perſon: And that they are true, we have not the leaſt reaſon to doubt, being reported by *eye witneſſes of his majeſty and power*; who were ſo convinced of his Divine authority that they ventured their fortunes and lives in his ſervice, merely to promote his honour. And as that whereby they perſwaded others to believe in him was the power of the SPIRIT working ſo many miracles by their hands, and the power of the HOLY GHOST in divers other wonderful gifts: ſo it was the ſame SPIRIT that firſt convinced them, and made them confidently conclude, that he was the *Son of God*. For the firſt time that we find they made a ſolemn acknowledgment of him, was upon the working of a great mi-

racle, before S. *Peter, James* and *John* heard the voice from Heaven, when they were with him in the holy Mount. He had fed, you read xiv. *Matth.* 19, *&c.* five thouſand men, beſide women and children, with five Loaves and two Fiſhes. And as ſoon as he had done,. *ſtraight-way conſtrained his Diſciples to get into a ſhip, and go before him unto the other ſide* (*ver.* 22.) leſt they ſhould joyn with the multitude in the deſign which he ſaw they had in hand (vi. *John* 15.) *to take him by force and make him a King.* When he had diſmiſſed the multitude, and ſpent the reſt of the day in prayer, he overtook his Diſciples in the midſt of the Sea, in the fourth watch of the night, and found them toſſed with the waves, becauſe the wind was contrary, xiv. *Matth.* 24, 25. They were afraid at the firſt ſight of him, and imagined it had been a Ghoſt: who perhaps they thought had raiſed that ſtorm. But when he ſpake to them, and bad them be of chear, and ſaid, *It is I, be not afraid*; *Peter* was deſirous, if it were he, that he would call him to him, and enable him to walk upon the water with him. And ſo he did, as if it had been firm land, till his heart began to fail him, when he ſaw the wind boiſterous. But then our Lord put forth

forth his hand and kept him from ſinking: and both brought him ſafe to the ſhip, and made a calm. Upon this, *They that were in the ſhip* (that is, the reſt of the Diſciples) *came and worſhipped him, ſaying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God, ver.* 33. The ſudden ceaſing of the wind, that is, his coming to them upon the water, his bearing up *Peter*, and making him walk along with him, and that when the ſurface of the water was not plain, but very rough by the croſsneſs of the wind, and his feaſting alſo great multitudes with little proviſion; made them conclude without any more ado, that he was greater than any man ever was. Their minds were overcome by this mighty power of God in him, which ſubdued their underſtandings perfectly to the faith, and ſo bowed and inclined their hearts, that they could not but proſtrate themſelves at his feet, and acknowledge him to be the anointed of God. They believed no doubt before that he was a great *Prophet*, and a *teacher ſent of God* (as *Nicodemus* did) nay, had ſome beginnings of faith that he was the *Meſſiah* (i. *John* 41, 45.) But it was not till now that they were ſure of it, and did him honour as, *of a truth*, or certainly, *the Son of God*. And

they were no eaſie People, that believed lightly and fooliſhly, only out of love of novelty, or ſome ſuch vain humour: but were convinced and overpowred by the hand of God, which was ſtretched out to work ſuch wonders as theſe, whenſoever *Jeſus* pleaſed.

III. And therefore he had great reaſon (which is the third and laſt conſideration) when any diſputed or doubted of his authority, to refer them, as he doth very often, to his miraculous works for a proof of it: and he appeals to them as one of his *Witneſſes*, according as *S. John* here calls them, when he ſays the *SPIRIT beareth witneſs*. So you read in ſeveral places of his Goſpel; where you find that when the *Jews* incircled him, as if they would not let him ſtir till he told them plainly whether he was the *CHRIST* or not, x. Joh. 24. *He anſwered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Fathers name, they bear WITNESS of me.* As if he had ſaid, I have no more for the preſent to tell you, than I have told you often by my *works*. If you can ſee nothing in theſe to convince you that I am the CHRIST, all my telling you ſo in *words* will be to no purpoſe, but for the preſent you muſt remain

main in unbelief. To the ſame effect he diſcourſes again in the ſame Chapter, verſ. 37, 38. *If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not* (though I ſhould ſay never ſo oft, I am his Son) *But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the* WORKS: *that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him.* And thus he reaſons with *S. Philip*, xiv. Joh. 10, 11. *Believeſt thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I ſpeak unto you I ſpeak not of my ſelf: But the Father that dwelleth in me, he doth the* WORKS. (a clear ſign he ſpake not of himſelf, and that he was moſt nearly one with the Father) *Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or elſe believe me for the very* WORKS *ſake.* And ſo he tells all his Apoſtles, that the Jews were inexcuſable upon this account, becauſe they did not acknowledge him for the Son of God, though he did ſuch miracles as *Moſes* and all the Prophets never did, xv. Joh. 24. *If I had not done among them the* WORKS *which none other man did, they had not had ſin:* (in not *receiving* him as their Meſſiah, the Son of God) *but now they have both ſeen* (by thoſe WORKS which he did) *and* (yet) *hated both me and my Father.* They could not endure ſuch a Meſſiah as he was,

though ſo divinely impowered; and conſequently had no love to God, who had ſet ſuch plain marks and characters of his approbation upon him. Of which his Divine works were the chief; for he alledges theſe (as *S. John* here in his Epiſtle doth) as the laſt witneſs and evidence to him upon Earth, v. Joh. 36. *But I have a greater witneſs than that of John; for the WORKS which the Father hath given me to finiſh, the ſame WORKS that I do, bear WITNESS of me, that the Father hath ſent me.* Yea, when *John* himſelf ſent his Diſciples to know of him whether he was the *CHRIST*, he plainly ſhows that he lookt on this as a greater teſtimony to him than that of their Maſter; which they had received already: and therefore gives them no other anſwer but this; *Go, and ſhew John again thoſe things which ye do hear and ſee: the blind receive their ſight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleanſed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raiſed up, and the poor have the Goſpel preached to them,* xi. *Matth.* 4, 5. Where though he mention his heavenly doctrine, yet he chiefly inſiſts upon the Witneſs of the SPIRIT, as moſt apt to affect them: and *in that very hour,* when they came to be reſolved, as S. *Luke* tells us, vii. 21. *He cured many of their infirmities and plagues,*

and

and of evil ſpirits, and unto many that were blind he gave ſight.

This he thought could not but ſatisfie them, if they would believe their eyes; eſpecially if they would believe alſo what they *heard*, that he raiſed up the dead. He could not now give them a clearer and fuller teſtimony of his Divinity: and he relyed ſo much upon this evidence, that when he had cured a Man ſick of the Palſy, he told the Scribes that he looſed him from the chain of his ſins, and reſtored him to health, and bad him ariſe and walk, now that he was pardoned, on purpoſe *that they might know the Son of Man hath power on EARTH to forgive ſins*, ix. Matth. 6. That is, to take away all *temporal* puniſhment that is due to ſin; as after his death and reſurrection, when he came to HEAVEN, he had power to take away the *Eternal*, and to give life Immortal. Now who could have ſuch a power but God only, as the Scribes ſay very well upon this occaſion? ii. *Mark* 7. Who could grapple with the Devil, the *Prince* the *God of this World* (xii. Joh. 31. 2 Cor. iv. 4.) but only He who is God bleſſed for ever, as Jeſus appeared by theſe miraculous works to be? And indeed it is very remarkable that He

wrought his miracles frequently, juſt as God Almighty brings things to paſs. *God,* ſays *Moſes, ſaid,* Let *there be Light, and there was light. He ſpake,* as the Pſalmiſts words are, *and it was done, he commanded and it ſtood faſt.* In like manner did our Saviour ſay to the Leper, viii. *Matth.* 3. *Be thou clean: and immediately his Leproſie was cleanſed.* And to the foul ſpirit, ix. *Mark* 25. *Come out, I charge thee, thou dumb and deaf ſpirit:* and the ſpirit cryed and came out. And to *Lazarus, Come forth; and he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes.* Which was a notable evidence that indeed he was the Son of God; ſince he acted ſo like to the Father Almighty. This was ſo well known that when the *Centurion* came and beſought him for a ſick Servant of his, who lay in grievous torments, and our Saviour promiſed to come and heal him; He modeſtly declines the acceptance of that favour, in a ſenſe of his unworthineſs to have him come under his roof, and deſires him that he would SPEAK THE WORD ONELY, and he believed his Servant ſhould be healed, viii. *Matth.* 8. The firſt Cure that we read particularly related being that of the Leper aforementioned (*v.* 3.) and wrought by a *Word*; He hoped, it is like

like, that his Servant might be cured as eaſily, without giving our Saviour the trouble of coming to his Houſe, and laying his hands on him for his recovery. Though, by the way, we may note; that herein appeared alſo his great power, that as he could heal (if he pleaſed) without touching, ſo he could heal at a great diſtance. Yea, the Woman that did but touch (not him, but) the very hem of his Garment (v. *Mark* 29.) had vertue or power (that is, ſomething from the SPIRIT that was in him) communicated to her, which reſtored her to perfect health. What doth all this note, but that he who wrought ſuch things; ſo eaſily, ſo readily, in any place, and on all occaſions, was indeed the Son of God? He ought to have been honoured as the Author, becauſe he was the Reſtorer of humane nature. There was great reaſon to acknowledge ſo great a Benefactor to Mankind to be more than a man; for none but God either could or would beſtow ſuch bleſſings.

It may be ſaid indeed that *Moſes* and ſome of the Prophets wrought Miracles; and yet cannot thence be concluded to be perſons of ſuch quality. But it may as eaſily be anſwered, that their miracles were

nothing

nothing comparable, either in their Multitude or Greatneſs, to thoſe of the Lord Jeſus. For the Multitude, remember how S. *John* concludes his Goſpel, in which he hath recorded ſome of them: *And there are alſo many other things,* ſays he, *which Jeſus did, the which if they ſhould be written every one,* I *ſuppoſe that even the World it ſelf could not contain the Books that ſhould be written.* For *he went about,* as hath been often ſaid, *doing good,* and filled every place with ſo many miracles of his mercy; that we cannot imagine into how many Volumes it would have ſwell'd, if a record of every one of them had been taken. And as for the greatneſs and the quality of them, you find ſome, among thoſe which S. *John* hath ſet down, which were never heard of before ſince the World began, ix. Joh. 32. which might well make our Saviour ſay, as I noted juſt now, that *he had done among them the works that no man did,* xv. 24. *elſe they had not had ſin*; that is, he could not have charged them with the guilt of refuſing to believe him to be the Son of God, becauſe it would not have been ſufficiently proved. But this is not all the reply that may be made to this exception: it is far more conſiderable, that Jeſus affirmed himſelf to be the Son of God; to which dignity

nity neither *Moſes* nor the Prophets ever pretended. The end of miracles, was to prove the truth of that which the perſon that wrought them delivered. And therefore as their miracles demonſtrated the truth of that meſſage which *Moſes* and the Prophets brought from God: So our Saviour's evinced the truth of *his*; which was that they were only the *ſervants*, but He the *Son* of God. This was as ſtrongly atteſted by what he did; as any thing the Men of God taught in former times, was by their works. Yea, his miracles bare as fair a proportion in their bigneſs and number to this high and great thing which they were to prove, that he was Gods Son: as the miracles of *Moſes* and the Prophets bare to thoſe leſſer truths which they were brought to eſtabliſh.

And here for to put a period to this part of my diſcourſe, it will be very uſeful to obſerve the different way of proceeding for the eſtabliſhing and promoting a Religion inſtituted by men, and a Religion whoſe author is God. This I find very well noted to my hand in a learned Writer of the *Jewiſh* Nation, whom I have already mentioned*. When men, ſays he, make Laws and ſetle a Religion, whoſe original is from their

* *Sepher* COSRI. *Part* 1. *ſect.* 80, &c

their own minds, and deviſed by themſelves; though they may pretend that it comes from God, yet they are not able to make it take place, without the power of the Sword, or the countenance and aſſiſtance of ſome Prince who by his Authority ſhall cauſe it to be received. But a Religion that is indeed Divine, is planted in a Divine manner. When Laws are derived from God, he eſtabliſhes them by his power and might, and over-aws men by ſuch wonders, as without any humane force procure obedience. Thus, ſays he, our Religion began. When the Children of *Iſrael* were in grievous ſervitude, and when the Land promiſed to their Fathers was in the hand of potent Kings; God ſent *Moſes* and *Aaron* armed with no power, but that of working miracles, changing the ordinary and uſual courſe of Nature, and inflicting in a moment grievous plagues upon the Water, the Earth, the Air, the Plants, the Beaſts, and the Bodies of Men, throughout all the Land of *Egypt*: whereby the Prince that kept them in bondage was forced to let them go. And in their Journey they were conducted by the guidance of a bright Cloud, and they paſſed through the Sea, and they were fed with Manna in the Wilderneſs XL. Years; and

ſaw

ſaw one Miracle after another, which convinced them they ought to ſubmit to that Word of the Lord which *Moſes* ſpake unto them. To this purpoſe that Writer very rationally diſcourſes. Now juſt as He ſhows that *Moſes* proved his Miſſion from God; ſo I have briefly related how our Saviour likewiſe demonſtrated that he was the Royal Prophet, whom *Moſes* foretold God would ſend into the World. In an Age, when they not only groaned under the *Roman* Yoke, but were alſo ſuperſtitiouſly inthral'd to a number of Rites and Ceremonies deviſed by their Elders, ſuperadded to all the burden of the Law of *Moſes*; and moreover grievouſly *oppreſſed by the Devil*, as all the reſt of the World likewiſe were, far more than they; God raiſed up a mighty Salvation to them out of the houſe of his ſervant *David*. Our Lord, that is, on a ſudden appeared as a Redeemer and Deliverer from the bondage in which they lay; not with any worldly policy or force, but meerly with the Spirit and Power of God, 1 *Cor.* ii. 5. who ſent an Herald, but without the power of Miracles, to proclaim his coming. And as ſoon as he had done *crying*, his mouth being ſtopt by *Herod*'s throwing him into Priſon, our Lord preſently came forth;

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ſhining moſt gloriouſly in the illuſtrious works that he did every where: which were ſuch as that time called for, as *Moſes* his miracles were proper to the occaſions and neceſſities of his days. And ſome of them were very like thoſe wrought by *Moſes*, and others bear as great a reſemblance to them, as twins are wont to do to each other, who lie together in the ſame womb. He healed more than *Moſes* killed. He turned their water into wine, as *Moſes* did the water of the River into bloud. He walkt upon the very ſurface of the Sea, and called one of his Diſciples to accompany him there. He fed multitudes with a little quantity of bread, as *Moſes* had fed the *Iſraelites* in the Wilderneſs. This he did more than once, and that in a Deſart too; ſhowing what he was able to do, if there had been the like need, that there was in former times. Then they ſhould not have asked *what ſign ſheweſt thou* (equal to *Moſes* they mean) *what doſt thou work?* vi. *John* 30. For it was plain enough he could have fed them forty years in that manner as well as once; which was the thing they ſeem to deſire, when they ſay in the next words, *ver.* 31. *Our Fathers did eat Manna in the Deſart, as it is written, He gave them bread from*

from Heaven to eat. That is, He did not feed them for one day or two (as thou haſt done) but a long time, and that from Heaven; let us ſee thee do ſo, that we may leave him and follow thee. And if he had not done enough already to work faith in them, and they had lived now alway in a Deſart, as their Fathers did then, no doubt he *would*; for that he *could* was evident, elſe how ſhould he have fed them thus miraculouſly at all? Many other miracles alſo declared that he had the ſame power in the Air, that he had on the Earth, and could as eaſily have brought bread from Heaven, as multiplied the Loaves which had now filled ſo many of them. The very Devils were as ſubject to him as the meaneſt creature in the World. And He raiſed the Dead by his powerful word, which *Moſes* never did. All which is recorded by the Apoſtles to ſhow what cauſe they had to believe in *Jeſus*, and how his Religion was planted and propagated in the world, as the other wonders are recorded by *Moſes*, to ſhow with what authority he came, and how he ſetled the *Iſraelites* in the belief of his Laws. And there is no more cauſe to queſtion whether *Jeſus* be the Son of God, the Lord of the World, who came

with

with ſuch a SPIRIT, than there wasthen to doubt whether *Moſes* was his ſervant and the Lawgiver of that people among whom he did ſuch wonders. Nor ſo much neither, for the greater his pretences were, the greater reaſon there was that they ſhould have been diſcountenanced by ſuch a SPIRIT as was in him, if they had not been true. It is incredible that God ſhould let the world be abuſed ſo long, by ſo many miracles, and ſo great, that never was the like; without any the leaſt confutation; and abuſed by a lye of ſo dangerous a nature, and ſo reproachful to his Name, and ſo directly oppoſite to his Government, which this Perſon (if he were an Impoſtor, and ſaid he was his Son whom we muſt worſhip, when he was not) ſought to overthrow, and take out of his hands. We are ſecure that God would not have abetted an Uſurper, in ſo high a manner, againſt himſelf. And as for any unclean Spirits, if they could have done ſuch things as *Jeſus* wrought, they would not have employed their power, we are ſure, to eſtabliſh a Doctrine ſo pure and holy as the Chriſtian Religion teaches, which utterly deſtroys all that wickedneſs in which they delight. There was all the reaſon in the World to believe one who came thus

by

by the SPIRIT, when he came by WATER too; and by his mighty power promoted nothing but the moſt excellent Piety, Vertue and Goodneſs among mankind.

But concerning the miracles of our Saviour there will be an occaſion to ſay ſo much, in purſuance of what I deſign, hereafter; that I ſhall add no more of them here. Let us now proceed (having heard what the SPIRIT did *by him*) to conſider what wonderful things it did *for him*: whereby it proved him to be the Chriſt, the Son of God.

II.

And the SPIRIT ſure very eminently bare witneſs of him, when it raiſed him from the dead, and not long after advanced him into Heaven, to live for ever with God. For both theſe are aſcribed to the power of the SPIRIT, in expreſs texts of Holy Scripture. Of the former you read in the 1 *Pet.* iii. 18. where the Apoſtle ſays, *He was put to death in the fleſh* (being mortal as we are) *but quickned by the SPIRIT*; that is, raiſed up again from the dead by that Divine power in him,

whereby he had raiſed up others before he died. It was impoſſible that he ſhould be held by the chains of death, who had ſuch a SPIRIT in him. By this he ſhook them off more eaſily, than *Samſon* brake the Withs or the Cords wherewith he was bound, when the *SPIRIT* of the Lord came mightily upon him. And being thus quickned again, the ſame *SPIRIT* alſo preſented him to God in the Heavens, as his dearly beloved Son, in whom he was well pleaſed; who had given him full ſatisfaction, and done his whole will, for which he ſent him into the world. So you read in the ix. *Hebr.* 14. where the *offering* which, the Apoſtle ſays, *he made of himſelf to God, through the eternal SPIRIT,* was that bloudy ſacrifice on the Croſs, which after his Reſurrection he offered to God, and continues ſtill to offer in the Heavenly Sanctuary: as the High Prieſt under the Law offered the bloud of beaſts, after they were ſlain at the Altar, in the moſt holy place of the Earthly Sanctuary. And this oblation is ſaid to be made by the *SPIRIT,* becauſe that raiſed him to life after he was ſlain, tranſlated him out of his mortal condition, carried him on high, made his body glorious and immortal; and having thus made him fit

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to be for ever with God, preſented him unto his Majeſty, where he remains, *through the power of an endleſs life*, a Prieſt for ever after the order of *Melchiſedek*. And *this working of the mighty power of God, which wrought in Chriſt when he raiſed him from the dead, and ſet him at his own right hand in the Heavenly places, far above all principalities and powers, might and dominion, and every name that is named*; was ſuch a teſtimony of the *SPIRIT* to him, that it confounded his adverſaries more than all the miracles which he had wrought by the power of the ſame *SPIRIT* in his life-time. And therefore the Apoſtles, I obſerve, alledge this immediately after the other, as that which *compleated the teſtimony* of the *SPIRIT* to him.

Till this was clear and evident, they relied wholly upon the other, as you may perceive by the diſcourſe of thoſe two Diſciples that went with our Saviour to *Emaus*. Who doubted of his Reſurrection after news had been brought them of it, but acknowledged him to have been a *Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people*; and upon that account were much troubled that their Rulers had

crucified him, becauſe they truſted it had been he which ſhould have redeemed *Iſrael*, xxiv. *Luke* 19, 20. When they were fully perſwaded therefore that he was indeed made alive again (as theſe very men preſently ſaw) then they add this as an argument of the greateſt force to convince the world, that he was the Son of God, the Redeemer of mankind. This is the ſubſtance, I obſerve, of both S. *Peter*'s firſt Sermons to the *Jews* and to the *Gentiles*. He begins with a relation how great *Jeſus* was in his Life, and then proceeds to ſhow how much greater God had made him by raiſing him from the dead. Read but what he ſays to his Crucifiers on the day of *Pentecoſt*, ii. *Acts* 22, 23, 24. where he firſt tells them that *Jeſus of Nazareth was a man approved of God among them by miracles, and wonders, and ſigns, which God did by him in the midſt of them, as they themſelves very well knew*: And then, that he being *delivered to them, and by wicked hands crucified and ſlain, God had raiſed him up, having looſed the pains of death, becauſe it was not poſſible that he ſhould be holden of it*. In like manner he diſcourſes to the firſt *Gentile* converts, x. *Acts* 38, 39, 40. where he tells *Cornelius* and his friends, how *God anointed Jeſus of Nazareth*

Nazareth with the Holy Ghoſt, and with power; and how he went about doing good, and healing all that were oppreſſed of the Devil, of which they were witneſſes, who had ſeen all that he did both in Judea and in Jeruſalem: and then adds that God *raiſed him up the third day, after he was ſlain and hanged on a Tree; and ſhewed him openly, though not to all the people yet, to witneſſes choſen before God, even to him and others, who did eat and drink with him after he roſe from the dead.* The Apoſtle had nothing to add beyond this, which was the greateſt teſtimony of the *SPIRIT* to him. Now it ſpake with a loud voice in his behalf: for if he had not been God's Son (as he ſaid he was) He would never have taken him out of his grave, much leſs have advanced him into the Heavens. Where it was manifeſted he now lived, by the coming of the HOLY GHOST; which fell upon *Cornelius* and his friends, while S. *Peter* was ſpeaking thoſe words. This was all that could be added to what the Apoſtle had ſaid; and God ſent this to prove his Reſurrection and Exaltation at his right hand. Which was ſuch an undeniable proof of his authority, that having thus raiſed him, the *SPIRIT*, as I ſaid, finiſhed its teſtimony to him. For how ſhould

it ſpeak plainer or more convincingly? or who can think that it would have continued to ſpeak for him, in this manner, after his death, if he had died with a lye in his mouth? The *SPIRIT*, which S. *John* here ſays, is the TRUTH, openly declared by reſtoring him to life, that his Bloud was moſt acceptable to God. It ſhowed that it was no common thing, but the BLOUD of the *Holy one of God*. It witneſſed to that WITNESS, and proved that as he did not ſpeak contrary to his knowledge, ſo he did not ſpeak contrary to the truth. And if the SPIRIT could not be believed in this, it would have loſt all its credit, and never have been believed more; we could never have known any thing by the greateſt wonders it can work, if ſuch things had been done for a deceiver, as it is apparent were done for *Jeſus*.

For that he was raiſed up to life again, we are aſſured by the teſtimony of the Apoſtles, and by the teſtimony of the Holy Ghoſt; of which none can reaſonably doubt, as it were eaſie to ſhow, if it were not my preſent buſineſs rather to demonſtrate that this was an irrefragable teſtimony of the SPIRIT to him, a moſt powerful

powerful means to beget faith and aſſurance in mens minds that *Jeſus* is the Son of God. It was for this very end, that S. *John* wrote the Hiſtory of his Reſurrection, and the ſeveral ſigns and tokens they had of it, as he tells us in thoſe words, xx. *John* 30, 31. *Many other ſigns truly did Jeſus in the preſence of his Diſciples, which are not written in this Book. But theſe are written, that ye might believe that Jeſus is the Chriſt the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his Name.* For this plainly reverſed the ſentence of condemnation which the *Jews* had paſs'd upon him. It ſhowed that he was acquitted in a far higher Court than that, which judged him worthy of death. Whoſe decree it reſcinded, and openly declared that he was no Blaſphemer, when he ſaid he was the Son of God. If he had, God would have been more concern'd than they to have kept him faſt in his grave for ever: that there, ſo great a lye might have been buried together with himſelf.

For the further clearing of which, it will be fit to conſider briefly theſe *three* things. *Firſt*, that before he died, he promiſed his Apoſtles that he would riſe again, and gave this alſo as a ſign to all

the people, whereby they ſhould know that he was the Chriſt. And, *ſecondly*, that he declared this to be the greateſt ſign he had to give of it. And, *thirdly*, that his very enemies confeſs it is a ſufficient ſign and ſatisfactory teſtimony of any truth.

I. For the firſt of theſe, that it was a ſign promiſed to his Apoſtles, and predicted to the people; there is nothing more eaſie to be obſerved in the Goſpel ſtory. For he tells his Apoſtles very often that they ſhould ſee him betrayed and killed, but on the third day he would riſe again. No ſooner had S. *Peter* confeſſed that he was the CHRIST, but *from that time forth Jeſus began to ſhew them, how that he muſt go to Jeruſalem, and there ſuffer many things, and be killed, and be raiſed again the third day*, xvi. *Matth.* 21. For he would not have them expect a *Chriſt* that ſhould reign here on Earth, but in Heaven. And till he went thither, he would not have them ſo much as preach that he was the CHRIST, *ver.* 20. And what he had ſaid here at *Cæſarea*, he repeats again when they were in *Galilee*, xvii. *Matth.* 22, 23. And again when they were going up to *Jeruſalem*, xx. 19.

And

And not many hours before he was apprehended, he ſaid again, *A little while and ye ſhall not ſee me: and again, a little while and ye ſhall ſee me, becauſe I go to the Father,* xvi. *John* 16. At which words they were greatly troubled, becauſe they minded more what he ſaid about his death, than they regarded his reſurrection which was to follow. But the greater their trouble was then, the greater their ſatisfaction was afterwards, when they ſaw him alive again. The leſs diſpoſed they were to believe it, the more confident they grew when they ſaw ſuch a wonder. They wept and lamented when he was gone, as he told them they would (*ver.* 20.) But when he came to ſee them again, their heart rejoyced with ſuch a joy, as none could diſpoil them of, *ver.* 22. The ground of which joy, you ſhall ſee preſently, when I have alſo remembred you how he foretold his Reſurrection to the people, as a teſtimony that he was the CHRIST. It was their wont in all Ages, and with great reaſon, to ask for a ſign that a man was ſent of God. And therefore now that *Jeſus* came with ſuch authority, as to redreſs many abuſes among them, and to reform that Nation and Temple, they ask him *what ſign ſheweſt thou unto us, ſeeing*

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that thou doeſt theſe things? ii. Joh. 18. He had given them ſigns enough already, and therefore makes no other anſwer but this (to let them know what ſhould be the laſt ſign.) *Deſtroy this Temple* (pointing to his own body) and *in three days I will raiſe it up*, verſ. 19.

From whence we may ſafely argue, that Jeſus having given this as a ſign and token whereby it ſhould evidently appear, more than by all his miracles, that he was the Son of God; the Almighty would never have fulfilled this promiſe and prediction, if He had uſurped his authority, and taken upon him to be his ANOINTED, without his leave. Nothing was more eaſie than to quaſh all his pretences, which relyed upon his Reſurrection; without which his Apoſtles, as I told you, had no authority to Preach that he was the *Chriſt*. It had been but letting him rot in his grave, as all men naturally do, when they are dead; and all the World would have been of the mind of the Phariſees, that he was a Deceiver. And God ſure hath not ſo little care of the World, as to deny them ſuch ready and obvious means of ſatisfaction, about the moſt important truth. We ought to think rather, that he would have con-

concerned himſelf to ſee, that this Temple, which he ſpake of, ſhould lye for ever in its ruines, and be turned to duſt and aſhes. He, who alone could do it, would have been ſo far from rearing it up again, that he would have provided, it ſhould be prophaned, and made the vileſt rubbiſh in the World. But there being very good proofs, *many infallible proofs* (as S. *Luke* ſpeaks, i. Act. 3.) that it was quite otherwayes, and that indeed it was raiſed after three days, as he had told the People; it was a Teſtimony from God moſt high, that He dwelt in that Temple, and that it was his Holy place, where he manifeſted his glory. He declared to them by this, that Jeſus was no Deceiver, but that they ought to believe he was the Chriſt of God. For that a man ſhould be raiſed from the dead, by any other power than that of God's; all the World concludes is impoſſible. If any of thoſe lying ſpirits, which love to cheat and abuſe the world, could do ſuch feats; why do we not ſee this frequently happen: that ſo they might break the force of this teſtimony, and overthrow our belief? Above all things they ſhould be concerned, one would think, to work this wonder; for then we ſhould be forced to confeſs, that there is nothing ſo eminent and ſingular in

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this thing, as to move us to give credit unto Jeſus. But ſince it never has been done, but only in this inſtance; and it was alſo a fulfilling of his word, when he gave it as a token of this truth; we have reaſon to conclude as S. *Paul* did after he had ſeen him alive, that *this is very CHRIST.* Upon this ground it was that the Apoſtles ſo much rejoyced, *when they ſaw him again*; for now, as S. *John* tells us, ii. 22. *when he was riſen from the dead, they remembred that he had ſaid this unto them* (concerning the raiſing up the Temple of his Body) *and they believed the Scripture, and the word which Jeſus had ſaid.* Now they were aſſured they had not been deluded, and yielded their aſſent, all this while, to a fancy. They ſaw clearly that he was their KING, though he had been vilely diſgraced and crucified. And therefore, when they parted with him again, after his Reſurrection, they did not lament and mourn as they had done before; but *worſhipped him, and returned to Jeruſalem, with great joy: and were continually in the Temple, praiſing and bleſſing God,* xxiv. Luk. 52, 53.

II. But it is time to add, that as it was a *ſign*, which he gave them before-hand of this Truth, ſo he told them, it was the

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greateſt ſign which he had to give. He had done many things in his life time to perſwade the *Jews*, that he was the *CHRIST*: But ſtill they were ſo perverſe, as to ask for more ſigns of it. Though he had done more miracles than ever *Moſes*, or all the Prophets had done from the beginning; yet the Phariſees continue to ſay, *Maſter, we would ſee a ſign from thee*, xii. Matth. 38. One would think they had a mind to learn of him, ſince they call him *Maſter*; but it was only a complement, as *S. Luke* informs us, xi. 16. And therefore our Saviour calls them, *an evil and adulterous generation*, who were degenerated from the manners of their pious anceſtors; for they were contented with leſs proofs of that which God required them to believe, and would have been aſhamed to *ſeek after a ſign*, as theſe men did, after ſuch evident tokens of a Divine preſence in him, as they beheld. Why ſhould he gratifie men of ſo naughty a humour, whom nothing would ſatisfie, but *a ſign from Heaven*, which *S. Luke* ſays they demanded? nor would be convinced then neither, he clearly diſcerned by their frivolous cavils at all that he had already done. Therefore he tells them, *no ſign ſhall be given them, but the ſign of the Prophet Jonas* (which was not a

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ſign from Heaven, but from the bowels of the Earth) *For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the Whales belly: ſo ſhall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the Earth*, verſ. 39,40. Which was as much as to ſay, It is in vain to attempt the conviction of ſuch corrupt and depraved minds as yours are, by ſuch means as theſe. And therefore, I muſt tell you, all that is remaining for the opening your eyes and conquering your perverſneſs, is my Reſurrection. As *Jonas* was miraculouſly reſtored again to live upon the earth, after he had been ſwallowed up by a *Whale* in the Sea, and layn there *three* days; which was a notable ſign that he was a Prophet, and could not but obtain him credit with the *Ninevites*, when they came to the knowledge of this wonder: So will I be reſtored again to life, after you have killed me, and I have layn three days in the bowels of the earth; and if this will not ſatiſfie you, there is no other ſign to follow this for your conviction. But let me tell you (as he adds, *verſ.* 41.) if you ſtill perſiſt in unbelief when this is fulfilled, *the men of Nineveh ſhall riſe in judgment with you and condemn you; for they repented at Jonas his preaching, and behold, a greater than Jonas is here.* That is, though *Jonas* was not really dead

dead, but only had his life wonderfully preſerved, yet the report of it wrought faith and the fruits of faith, repentance and amendment, in the hearts of the *Ninevites*; and what a condemnation will it prove to you, if after you have ſeen me actually dead, and it be demonſtrated to you that I am raiſed to life again, you will not believe on me?

The very ſame thing is repeated again, xvi. *Matth.* 4. where, they having once more demanded *a ſign from Heaven*, ver. 1. He anſwers them, that they ſhould have none but this of *Jonas*: *and he left them, and departed.* As if he had ſaid, I have nothing more to ſay to you now: all that remains, is that I dye and riſe again, which is the laſt and greateſt token that I am the *CHRIST.* And indeed this was a ſign ſo great, that it gave force and ſtrength, to the other ſigns which had been given of this Truth. For in the next Chapter (*Matth.* xvii. 9.) we read, that Three Apoſtles having been confirmed in this belief by a voice from Heaven, which ſaid, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleaſed; hear ye him*; Jeſus charges them, ſaying, *Tell the Viſion to no man, until the Son of man be riſen again from the dead.* Till

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He had taken poſſeſſion of his Kingdom and was ſet upon his Throne and thence ſent the Holy Ghoſt, He ſaw it would be to no purpoſe for the Apoſtles to publiſh this teſtimony of God the Father to him. For they had already ſlighted the teſtimony of *John Baptiſt*, who heard the like Voice from Heaven at his Baptiſm, and thereupon bare witneſs that Jeſus was the Chriſt: And therefore it was not likely, that they would liſten to the Apoſtles, when they came and teſtified that the ſame words were ſpoken in their hearing; until their teſtimony ſhould be juſtified by the authority of ſuch a proof as this, that he was riſen from the dead. This would mightily back all that they ſaid; and make it undeniable by any, but thoſe who would ſtill deny his Reſurrection: which was wilfully and without any reaſon, not only to call them lyars, but to affront the Holy Ghoſt, who witneſſed together with them, that he was riſen from the dead. Which being a proof of ſuch ſtrength that our Saviour relyed upon it above all other, it is manifeſt to common reaſon, that if there be a God (as we are ſure there is) who loves ſincerity and truth; he ſhould above all things, have taken order, that this ſhould not have had ſuch evidence as it hath,

hath, if indeed Jeſus was not his Son. Though he had ſuffered wonders to be done by him, and voices from Heaven had been heard, yet ſtill he gained not much belief in the moſt conſiderable part of the *Jewiſh* Nation: and therefore appealing in concluſion to this Grand Teſtimony, ſure there is no providence, or elſe it would have taken care, in caſe he had been a deceiver, that it ſhould have been as evident that he did not riſe from the dead, as now it is that he did. Though the World had been amuſed a long time with diſcourſes about him, and with ſtrange things which he was thought to do; yet here had been a nick of time at one ſtroke to have broken the force of all theſe arguments, and blaſted his credit, and undeceived the People, had there been nothing of God in it. But ſince this laſt and greateſt token did come to paſs, as was proved by witneſſes of unqueſtionable truth, it juſtified his pretences, and added ſtrength to all the former teſtimonies which had been given to him: demonſtrating him plainly to have been *a man approved of God among them, by miracles, wonders & ſigns, which God did by him in the midſt of them, as they themſelves knew.*

III. And this truly was ſo great a ſign, that his very Enemies could not but confeſs it was ſatisfactory; and a ſufficient evidence of any truth. Which may be clearly diſcern'd from hence, that they never, to this day, went about to ſhow that though he was raiſed again, yet it was not a proof that he was the CHRIST: but all their endeavour hath been to perſwade the People, that he was not raiſed again. They had no other way but to deny *this*, that ſo they might not confeſs the *other*. They were utterly undone, they knew, and muſt loſe all their reputation with the People, if he was raiſed from the dead (becauſe it would effectually prove what they denied) and therefore they hired the Souldiers to ſay, that his Diſciples ſtole him away while they ſlept. A ſtory ſo ſillily contrived (as I hope to ſhow in another place) that it it is a very great evidence, they ſhut their eyes againſt this light, for fear it ſhould ſhow them that they had been the Murderers of their CHRIST. They could not but ſay, that if he was raiſed again, he was the CHRIST; and therefore were reſolved to ſay any thing, though never ſo abſurd, rather than grant that he was raiſed to life again, which muſt ſtrike them dead.

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He was not a King for their purpoſe; and therefore they hated him and endeavoured by any means to obſcure whatſoever tended to prove his authority. He never made any ſhow of worldly greatneſs, or gave them any hope he would fight their battles againſt the *Romans*; and therefore they entred into a league againſt him, to make perpetual war with him: and ſought by all the lyes they could invent, to ſuppreſs his growing Name, and by all the cruelties they had power to uſe, to diſhearten his followers from profeſſing their belief in it. But the Apoſtles of our Lord knowing the truth of this better than they could do, and that it was a meer calumny which they ſpread abroad concerning their ſtealing his Body out of the Sepulchre; could not be deterred by any puniſhment, which they or all the power on earth could inflict, from preaching *Jeſus and the Reſurrection.* For on the one hand they ſaw it was confeſſed by malice it ſelf, that if he was raiſed from the dead, it could not be denyed that he was the CHRIST; and on the other hand they ſaw, with their own eyes, that he was raiſed from the dead, and knew it was a malicious ſlander which the Phariſees had divulged, of their breaking open the Monument of the dead. This both confirmed

their faith, and inflamed their zeal. If they had any doubts remaining, this very tale helpt to diſperſe them. But they were ſoon paſt all doubt by the coming of the Holy Ghoſt, which he ſent them, to witneſs the Reſurrection together with them. Then it was impoſſible they ſhould doubt of his being alive, when they felt his mighty power in their hearts. This diſſipated all the miſts and vapours, which had gathered about them, and darkned their underſtandings. By this Jeſus brake forth upon them in a freſh luſtre: and like the Sun, rending all the Clouds in pieces, illuminated not only them, but the whole World, in a ſhort ſpace, with the beams of his Glory.

How ſhould he do otherways, after ſuch a proof as this; which is ſo great that they could never wiſh for a greater? It is not above ſix hundred years ago, ſince a Jew called EL DAVID, gave out that he was *the Chriſt*, and drew a great many followers after him. Upon which he was apprehended and brought before an *Arabian* Prince, who askt him; *What miracle, what prodigie doſt thou ſhow that we may believe?* To which he anſwered, *Sir, cut off my head, and I will live again.* This he ſaid craftily,

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to avoid greater torments which he foreſaw would be inflicted on him, for affirming that which he could not prove. But obſerve the Princes reply; (as it is related by *Maimonides*, in a letter of his to the Jewes at *Marſeilles*, about this very buſineſs:) *Thou canſt not give us a greater ſign than this. And if it fall out ſo, that thou doſt riſe again to life after I have cut off thy head, I, and all my People (nay all the World ſure) will believe what thou ſayeſt is true; and that our Forefathers inherited nothing but vanity and lies, which did not profit them.* And preſently the experiment was made; He commanded him to be beheaded, and there was an end of his cheat. And ſo likewiſe there had been of this buſineſs which we are treating of, if Jeſus had not riſen. For he ſaid juſt as this *El David* did, Kill me, if you pleaſe; I will live again. Which ſign coming to paſs, as we have the greateſt reaſon to believe, we ought to follow the reſolution of the Prince now mentioned, by ſubmitting our ſelves to him, and heartily acknowledging him to be the Lord. When he was upon his Croſs, the Chief Prieſts, with the Scribes and Elders, ſaid, *He ſaved others,*

let him ſave himſelf. If he be the King of Iſrael, let him now come down from the Croſs, and we will believe him: xxvii. Matth. 41, 42. If our Lord had taken them at their word, we cannot tell what they would have done. But it is plain, he intended to give them a better ground of Faith than that. If they had demanded a greater thing, they ſhould have had greater ſatisfaction. If they had ſaid, *He raiſed others from the dead, let him raiſe up himſelf, after we have crucified him; let him come out of his Grave, if he be the KING of Iſrael;* and then have uſed all the care in the World, to ſee whether he roſe again, or no: they had been convinced and perſwaded to believe on his Name. It was not fit to do the other, becauſe he was to Dye for the Sins of the People: But this he did, though they did not ask it, to fulfill his own promiſe, and to ſhow that he was the Perſon promiſed to their Fathers. And it is ſo much greater than the other, as it is a greater thing, to be made alive again after Death, than to ſave a Man's ſelf from dying.

I hope then I may conclude with the Apoſtle S. *Paul*, that this piece of the Myſtery of Godlineſs is without controverſie, *God was manifeſt in the fleſh, Juſtified*, ἐν Πνεύματι, *in* or *by the* SPIRIT. The SPIRIT which did ſuch mighty things by *Jeſus*, and at laſt raiſed him from the dead, warranted him to be God manifeſted in our fleſh. It cleared him from all the envious and malicious accuſations of his adverſaries, while he was alive, by the many miraculous works which it wrought: and it purged him from all ſuſpicion of blaſphemy, which was charg'd againſt him, and took away his life, by raiſing from the dead, and preſenting him in Heaven a pure oblation to God. It hath acquitted him fully in all impartial mens thoughts, wiped off all the guilt which was caſt upon him, ſet him before the eyes of all the world as a perſon innocent and juſt; and made him glorious and *great even in his bloud* (as thoſe words may be rendred, xiii. *Hebr.* 20.) wherewithal he is gone into the Heavenly places, there to appear before God for us: which he would not have been able, nor ever dared to do, if he were not *fully juſtified*, and perfectly a righteous perſon.

This is that witneſs which our Saviour himſelf promiſes to *Nathanael*, as higher than that, which he had already received, i. *John* 50, 51. He was convinced of the Authority of *Jeſus*, and acknowledged him to be the King of *Iſrael*, becauſe he could ſearch into the ſecrets of the hearts, and know men at a diſtance: But our Lord tells him he ſhould *ſee greater things than theſe*, even, *behold the Heavens opened, and the Angels of God, aſcending and deſcending upon the Son of man.* That is, He ſhould have the witneſs of the SPIRIT, ſending the Angels to miniſter unto him, when he was raiſed from the dead, and when he was exalted unto Gods right hand in the Heavens.

The *Aſcenſion and Deſcenſion* of Angels is but an *Hebrew* form of ſpeech, whereby they expreſs the miniſtry and ſervice of Angels to the Divine Majeſty. A ſervant firſt goes to his Maſter to receive his orders, before he can be ſent by him; and therefore *aſcending* is put before *deſcending*: and by both is nothing elſe meant, but the miniſtry of thoſe Heavenly Creatures, that wait upon the Throne of God, and *do his Commandments, hearkening to the voice of his Word.* From thence they were ſent

ſent to attend on *Jeſus* at his Reſurrection, and at his Aſcenſion, as his Diſciples witneſſed and *Nathanael* among the reſt; for he is mentioned as a perſon preſent when *Jeſus* ſhowed himſelf to his Diſciples after his Reſurrection (xxi. *John* 2.) and is thought by many to be the ſame with S. *Bartholomew*. As *Iſrael* ſaw in a dream the Angels *aſcend and deſcend* upon a Ladder reaching from Earth to Heaven (xxviii. *Gen.* 12.) So this *true Iſraelite* (who, as *Greg. Nyſſen* * expreſſes it, ſhowed καθαρὸν ἐφ' ἑαυτῷ χαρακτῆρα τῷ Πατριάρχῃ, &c. the pure character or mark of that Patriarch upon him, in his honeſty and uprightneſs of heart) beheld the like viſion of Angels, but in a more apparent manner, when he was awake: that he might hereby be confirmed in the faith of *Jeſus*; as *Jacob* was by his viſion in the belief of God's providence. And indeed this was a great confirmation to his and to our faith. For I conceive that this phraſe ἐπὶ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, *upon the Son of man*, is the ſame with that where it is ſaid the Holy Ghoſt came ἐπ' αὐτὸν, *upon him*. Which as it ſignifies that he was made partaker, or rather was poſſeſſed of the Holy Ghoſt, and it became His: ſo this other like phraſe of the Angels aſcend-

* *Homil.* 15. *in Cantic.*

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ing and deſcending *upon him*, denotes, by the ſame reaſon, that he was made the Lord of them; and had them given to him as his miniſters and attendants, to be imployed in his ſervice. And ſo it was remarkably fulfilled which our Saviour ſaid, that he ſhould *ſee GREATER things than thoſe* he mentioned before: For hereby he knew, not only that he was the *King of Iſrael*, as he had confeſſed, *ver.* 50. but that he was the *King of Angels, the Lord of Lords.* Yea, hereby it appeared that he hath the power of God, becauſe juſt as the Angels are repreſented doing their ſervice to his Majeſty (in that xxviii. of *Geneſis*) ſo our Lord foretells with the greateſt certainty, they ſhould ſee them waiting upon him. And ſo they did, as you read in the firſt of the *Acts* of the Apoſtles, *ver.* 9, 10, 11. which proved him to be indeed *the heir of all things.*

Now to ſhew a little more fully the greatneſs of this Teſtimony of the SPIRIT, and that it was greater (as *Jeſus* here ſaith to *Nathanael*) than the gift of diſcerning Spirits, which I called a gift of the *Holy Ghoſt*, to diſtinguiſh it from the *Spirit*; let us conſider a little that ſpeech of our Saviours, xii. *Matth.* 31, 32. *Where-*

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fore I ſay unto you, all manner of ſin and blaſphemy, ſhall be forgiven unto men: but the blaſphemy of the Holy Ghoſt, ſhall not be forgiven unto men, &c. Which heavy doom S. *Mark* tells us was pronounced upon them, *becauſe they ſaid, he had an unclean ſpirit*, iii. 30. This ſhows what the blaſphemy was, in which if they continued there was no hope of pardon. For if he by the *SPIRIT of God caſt out Devils* (as he tells them, *ver.* 28.) then it was rank blaſphemy, the higheſt degree of evil ſpeaking and calumny, to impute theſe very cures and wonderful works to the power of the Devil, which were wrought by that Divine power. And this ſin was therefore unpardonable, which ſhows how great this teſtimony of the SPIRIT is, becauſe there were no means left to convince them that *Jeſus* was the Son of God (without which belief their ſins could not be forgiven) if they perſiſted not only in denying the authority of the SPIRIT, but were ſo bold as to blaſpheme it. For what could work upon their hard hearts, if this proved ineffectual? might they not better deny the voices from Heaven, which they did not hear, than theſe wonderful works, which they beheld every where with their own eyes? Or

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might they not as well ſay that thoſe were deluſions, as call theſe works diabolical operations? Might they not in like manner ſlight his power of knowing ſecrets, and impute it to ſome other skill? What is there in which they might not ſhuffle and reſiſt the light, if in ſo clear a caſe as this, *Jeſus* his oppoſition to the Devil, caſting him out of poſſeſſion, and that on purpoſe to eſtabliſh an holy doctrine, quite contrary to his intereſt, and in a number of other miraculous works, they would be ſo obſtinate as to ſay, the Devil himſelf had the principal hand. There is no queſtion to be made, but they who were ſo perverſe as not to ſee *this finger of God*, but continued blinder than the *Egyptian* Magicians, when it did ſo many wonders, would ſhut their eyes againſt any other means of conviction, which could not be expected (it muſt alſo be remembred) becauſe God himſelf had no higher evidence to give them, than this of his *SPIRIT*.

But then you muſt not underſtand this ſpeech of our Saviour, as if he meant that thoſe perſons, to whom he ſpake theſe words, had run themſelves at that inſtant, into this unpardonable ſin: but that if they

they ſtill proceeded to blaſpheme it, when the *SPIRIT* had finiſhed its teſtimony (that is, done all thoſe things which ſtill were behind, for their conviction) then they would fall into it, and remain in it irrecoverably. For you muſt remember that under the word *SPIRIT* is comprehended the power that raiſed Chriſt from the dead, and preſented him to God in the Heavens; that he might receive of him the promiſe of the *Holy Ghoſt*, which he ſhed upon the Apoſtles abundantly, as a witneſs of his Reſurrection and glorious Exaltation. If after this, that *Jeſus* was riſen again from the dead, aſcended into Heaven, and ſhowed himſelf to be there by ſending the *Holy Ghoſt* upon his Apoſtles, they did not believe, but ſtill blaſphemed the holy name of *Jeſus*, and the *SPIRIT* of God, ſaying, That *they* were drunk who were filled with the *Holy Ghoſt*, as here they ſaid *Jeſus* had a Devil; then they were uncapable of obtaining remiſſion of ſin, becauſe there was nothing more to be done for their converſion, but they muſt be abandoned to the hardneſs and impenitence of their hearts. This I am ſure muſt be the meaning, becauſe our Lord himſelf, after he had pronounced the *Phariſees* unpardonable, who ſpake againſt

againſt the *SPIRIT,* whereby he caſt out Devils, tells them expreſly that there was one ſign more remaining to convince them (which is a demonſtration they had not yet ſinned incurably, nor could not till that ſign was paſt) and that was the ſign, as you heard, of the Prophet *Jonas, ver.* 39, 40. which he grants them again, xvi. 4. ſhould not be denied them. Now every body underſtands by this, His Death, and Reſurrection, with thoſe things that followed upon it, the ſending of the Holy Ghoſt to enable his Apoſtle to go and teach all Nations, as *Jonas* went, after he came, as we may ſay, out of his grave, and preached to the great City *Nineveh.* But then this was ſtill the *SPIRIT,* that was thus continued to them (by that our Lord being raiſed, and it working wonders alſo at his Death) which if they continued to reſiſt, when it had fully done the whole office of a witneſs, and was all poured forth, then they were under the abſolute ſentence of condemnation. In brief, *To blaſpheme the SPIRIT in this comprehenſive ſence of the Word (including the Reſurrection, and that which followed to prove it) was the unpardonable ſin and none elſe.* And thus our Saviour's meaning is to be expounded; if

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one ſhould *ſpeak a word againſt the Son of man*, (that is Him) deſpiſing him becauſe of his poor Parentage, and calling him the *Son of a Carpenter*, or ſome ſuch name; this, though blameable, might be pardoned, *propter corporis vilitatem*, as S. *Hierom* ſpeaks, becauſe of the meanneſs of his outward appearance. Nay, if a man proceeded ſo far as to call him *a glutton, a Wine-bibber, a friend of Publicans and ſinners*; this alſo might find pardon, becauſe he did not hitherto ſpeak evil of the works proper to a God, but only of thoſe belonging to a man. And more than this, ſhould he call him *deceiver* or *ſeducer*, when he heard him teach the people; it would not be unpardonable, becauſe no man is to be believed merely upon his own word. But if when theſe men ſaw the mighty works of the *SPIRIT* juſtifying his preaching to be Divine, they ſtill continued to ſpeak evil of him; this was a very dangerous blaſphemy: becauſe they could not after this call him a ſeducer or falſe Teacher, but they muſt reproach the holy *SPIRIT* as well as him, and call that the work of the Devil, which was performed by the power of the Spirit of God. And if when the HOLY GHOST was come from Heaven upon the Apoſtles, witneſſing

neſſing that he was *quickned by the SPIRIT,* and by the ſame *SPIRIT* preſented to God in the Heavens, they ſtill went on to ſpeak evil of him, then there was no hope of remiſſion, becauſe they blaſphemed the laſt remedy for their recovery, which was the Holy Ghoſt ſent down from Heaven to perſwade them to repent and believe on his name.

And that we muſt take our Saviour in this ſence, is further apparent from the name of the HOLY GHOST, which he uſes when he ſpeaks of this unpardonable ſin, never calling it the *blaſphemy againſt the SPIRIT,* but always the blaſphemy againſt the HOLY GHOST: which you know was not as yet given, when our Saviour ſpake theſe words. In the beginning of this diſcourſe, xii. *Matth.* 28. he mentions only the *SPIRIT.* But then coming to deſcribe the danger of blaſphemingit, he doth not ſay that the blaſphemy of the *SPIRIT* ſimply, that is, of thoſe preſent works of his was unpardonable: but that the blaſphemy againſt the HOLY GHOST, when it was come, ſhould never be forgiven. Which muſt needs be underſtood, as I have already argued, concerning the contempt and reproachful

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uſage of thoſe following *witneſſes*, the Reſurrection, Aſcenſion, and the preaching of the Apoſtles endowed with power from on high; becauſe though the *SPIRIT* now wrought among them, yet the HOLY GHOST was not come to be his ADVOCATE and plead his cauſe; and therefore could not as yet be blaſphemed by them. By HOLY GHOST then in our Saviour's language here, I ſuppoſe is meant all that was left ſtill to be done for his Juſtification; and that it is ſo wide a word in this place, as to include in it the *SPIRIT* alſo. For he was ſpeaking before of the *SPIRIT*, and therefore when he alters the phraſe, he doth not leave out the teſtimony of that, but imbraces it within the compaſs of a larger word: which it was neceſſary to uſe, that he might ſhow when that ſin, which they had begun in a deſperate manner, would be ſo complete, that it could never be undone. And that was when the HOLY GHOST had conſecrated the Apoſtles to their great office (which ſuppoſes his Reſurrection) and filled them with all Divine gifts: among which, you know, was a power (xiv. *John* 12.) *to do greater works than theſe*, which our Saviour is here ſpeaking of (called the *SPIRIT*:) Then if they did

not believe there was no remedy, but they muſt periſh in their infidelity. But till then they, to whom our Saviour ſpeaks, were not arrived at this hopeleſs condition, becauſe they had hitherto only blaſphemed the *SPIRIT*, not the *HOLY GHOST*, *which was not yet given, becauſe Jeſus was not yet glorified.* But when it was given, and they reproached that, as they had done the *SPIRIT*, then they were under irrecoverable condemnation: there being nothing more to be done for the opening their eyes, and perſwading them, that *Jeſus* was the *Son of God.* They had made a fair ſtep to it in our Saviour's life-time, by reſiſting the mighty power of the *ſpirit*; but it was poſſible they might ſee their error, becauſe there was ſtill a more mighty power behind, which firſt raiſed up and glorified *Jeſus*, and then enabled his Apoſtles to do more wonderful things, than he had done when he was on Earth.

And therefore I obſerve that afterward the word HOLY GHOST is ſometimes uſed in this large ſence, for all the Power that was given the Apoſtles, whether of Prophecy, and Languages, or of healing and caſting out Devils (which laſt are

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ſometimes peculiarly called the *SPIRIT*) and ſo not to be diſtinguiſhed from the other, which it incloſes. Thus the word HOLY GHOST in ii. *Hebr.* 4. may be referred not only to *gifts* immediately preceding, but to *ſigns, wonders and miracles*, before mentioned. And after S. *Peter* and *John* had cured a lame man, they ſay the HOLY GHOST was a witneſs to *Jeſus*, v. *Acts* 31. But though this word be ſo largely uſed in ſome places (as *SPIRIT* alſo ſometimes ſignifies all the reſt, ii. *Acts* 4, 17. and ſometimes all but that which is called *power*, 1 *Cor.* ii. 4.) yet commonly you will find the word HOLY GHOST having a peculiar reference to thoſe other gifts of Illumination, not of Power, iv. *Acts* 8. v. 3. vii. 55. x. 44, 45. and eſpecially xix. 2, 6. where you read that S. *Paul* found certain Diſciples at *Epheſus*, who had not ſo much as heard whether there was any HOLY GHOST, who had heard no doubt of the miraculous works both of Chriſt and his Apoſtles. Now when theſe and the HOLY GHOST were both joyned together; when *Jeſus* had given them the witneſs of his Bloud, and of his Reſurrection, and the Goſpel came *not only in POWER*, but in the HOLY GHOST, as S. *Paul* ſpeaks, 1 *Theſſ.* i. 5.

Then they who perſiſt to blaſpheme the name of *Jeſus*, were in an hopeleſs condition, paſt all the methods of God to bring them to forgiveneſs. All which I have ſaid, as diſtinctly as I could, to explain that which has perplexed ſo many, and to ſhow the ſtrength of this *Witneſs*: which our Saviour ſo much relied upon, that he knew not a greater to convince them, when once it had ſaid all that it intended in his behalf. To which let this be added, as an argument of the greatneſs of this teſtimony, that they who apoſtatized from the Chriſtian Faith, are therefore condemned to a ſorer puniſhment than they who forſook *Moſes*, not only becauſe they accounted the *BLOUD* of *Jeſus* an unholy thing, and deſpiſed that witneſs, but alſo *did deſpite to the SPIRIT of Grace*, which by raiſing him from the dead, proved his BLOUD to be the Bloud of the Son of God, x. *Hebr.* 29. This is ſet down laſt of all in that place, becauſe it filled up the meaſure of their ſin. This made them uncapable of the benefit of any ſacrifice for ſin (as it is, *ver.* 26.) that they ſo ſlighted, yea, vilified and reproached, carried themſelves contumelioufly (as the word imports) towards the *SPIRIT* of God, which was the greateſt Teſtimony on

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Earth that our Saviour had, and was followed with the HOLY GHOST ſent down from Heaven. And they muſt needs be guilty of ſuch diſgraceful uſage of the *SPIRIT*, yea, of the *SPIRIT of Grace*, that Spirit which God had ſo graciouſly poured, not only upon *Jeſus*, but upon the Apoſtles, and perhaps upon themſelves, if they did deny *Jeſus*, and renounce his Religion: becauſe this was in effect to tell the world, that this was not the Spirit of God, but of the Devil, and that it did not prove his Reſurrection from the dead, but, whatſoever it ſaid, He was a blaſphemer, when he called himſelf the *Son of God*.

Thus I have done now with this laſt *Witneſs on Earth*, the *SPIRIT*: which you ſee concurs and agrees with all the former in this Truth. There is not the ſmalleſt difference between them, nothing to make us ſuſpect them to be falſe witneſſes; for they are all found (to ſpeak in our vulgar phraſe) in the very ſame ſtory, punctually, and in terms affirming this, that *Jeſus is the Son of God*. This he preached, who never did any ſin, neither was guile found in his mouth; This *John* Baptiſt likewiſe proclaimed with a loud voice;

The Bloud of *Jeſus* atteſted this before all the people; this was the very Title over his Croſs, that he was *KING OF THE JEWS*; and this the *SPIRIT* ſaid; it was the language of every one of his wonderful works; and of his Reſurrection alſo and his Inthronization (of which the Holy Ghoſt gave aſſurance) which conſpired to teſtifie this, and expreſly juſtified it to all the World. And therefore how can we chuſe but think this a ſure word [that he is the Son of God] which is eſtabliſhed out of the mouth not of two or three, but of twice three witneſſes, of unqueſtionable credit. And theſe three laſt treated of, challenge from us a very careful conſideration, and we ought the more duly to weigh what they ſay, becauſe they were *on Earth*: and upon that account, nearer to us, as I told you, more evident at firſt ſight, more ſtrongly atteſted by innumerable witneſſes, that they might ſerve for a greater confirmation, even of the truth of the reſt. The Teſtimony of the FATHER is certain, becauſe it was heard by ſeveral excellent perſons; yea, once by a multitude of people. That of the WORD alſo is infallible, and we cannot with any reaſon doubt whether there was ſuch evidence, becauſe S. *Ste-*

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ven, S. *Paul*, S. *John* were perſons of unſpotted reputation, who heard it, and alſo did and ſuffered the hardeſt things upon the credit of it. That the HOLY GHOST alſo fell upon him at his Baptiſm, a great Prophet ſo confidently affirmed, that it was prophaneneſs to deny it. But yet, excepting the Teſtimony of the *Holy Ghoſt* after his Aſcenſion, there were none of thoſe Witneſſes in Heaven heard by ſo many, as theſe three laſt mentioned, who, as S. *John* ſays, bare witneſs in Earth.

It was a notorious thing to all the Country (which *Jeſus* travelled) that he led a moſt holy life. No man could faſten the ſuſpicion of any crime upon him, but the cry of the people was, like that when he opened a blind mans eyes, *He hath done all things well*, vii. *Mark* 37. And yet he lived not a retired life; he did not hide himſelf in corners, nor ſhut up himſelf in private houſes: but converſed ſo freely, that they found fault with him (though unjuſtly) for being too familiar, and keeping company with Publicans and ſinners. And as for his BLOUD, the ſecond Witneſs on Earth, that was ſhed in the face of the Sun, at a great feaſt, when

from foreign Countries they were aſſembled at *Jeruſalem.* All the accidents, which we ſay attended his death, were things that never have been contradicted. No man then had the impudence to deny the Eclipſe of the Sun, the Earthquake, the rending of the veil of the Temple, and the reſt of the aſtoniſhing things that then hapned. The firſt of them is mentioned by a Pagan-writer; and though the Apoſtles publiſhed both that and all the other continually, yet there is no book either of *Jew* or *Gentile* (who were enemies great enough to his Religion) that goes about to diſprove them. And as for his *miraculous works*, they were generally done openly, at Feaſts, in the Synagogues, on the high-ways; and were ſo commonly talkt of, that the Rulers feared all the world would run after him, xii. *John* 19. Therefore the Apoſtles could not falſifie in the report of theſe things, but they might be eaſily confuted. Which no man ever attempted, but both *Jews* and *Gentiles* acknowledged that he wrought Miracles; for his Apoſtles alſo wrought them every where, and ſo did their Succeſſors in ſome Ages after. To theſe the Ancient Chriſtians appeal, as an undoubted teſtimony to their Faith: which they could not

not be ſo ſilly as to mention, were there any diſpute whether there had been Miracles wrought or no. His *Reſurrection* alſo was atteſted by Five hundred people, who ſaw him together at once; and it was proved beyond contradiction by the ſtrange deſcent of thoſe miraculous gifts upon his Apoſtles, according to his promiſe. Which came upon them alſo at a Feaſt, when all the Nation, though living in far diſtant Countries, were aſſembled together, and a great company of Proſelytes alſo, and devout people were preſent, to be witneſſes of it. Yea, the Apoſtles themſelves, as is notoriouſly known, went over all the world, and openly ſhowed the power of *Jeſus* which was in them.

Now if all theſe be true Witneſſes, or rather if you grant there were ſuch Witneſſes, which no ſober man can deny (they being viſible here *on Earth*, in the company of ſo much people) there can be no doubt remaining of this, that *Jeſus is the Son of God*. They proclaim this ſo loudly with one voice, that S. *John* had reaſon to ſay, *We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father*. They beheld it in his Preaching and Life; they beheld

beheld it in his bloudy Death, but eſpecially in the power of his *SPIRIT* both before he died, and in raiſing him up from the dead: and they beheld it alſo, when they were with him in the holy Mount, and had the Teſtimony of the reſt of the Heavenly Witneſſes. Which were heard on Earth, though they were in Heaven; as men of high quality, and of unblemiſhed integrity, with the hazard of all they had, did conſtantly affirm. And though ſome of thoſe Heavenly Witneſſes might not be believed ſo much at the firſt (which is the cauſe, I ſuppoſe, that our Saviour bids his Apoſtles, as you have heard, not declare what the voice from Heaven ſaid, till after his Reſurrection, xvii. *Matth.* 9.) yet when they had received ſuch great teſtimony, that they were good men, and men of God, by having the Holy Ghoſt beſtowed on them, to beſtow upon others alſo; and when by this they were able to demonſtrate his Reſurrection; then all the reſt that they alledged, as a proof that he was the Son of God, did highly merit belief alſo, and there was no reaſon to ſuſpect the truth of ſuch reports, as were verified in ſo authentick a manner. For *with great power gave the Apoſtles witneſs of the Reſurrection of the* Lord *Jeſus*, iv. *Acts* 33. And

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the Reſurrection of the Lord *Jeſus* was a powerful Witneſs, that there was nothing ſo great ſaid of him, by the voices from Heaven, but it ought to be received as the undoubted truth of God. Who at ſundry times, and in divers manners teſtified to his Son *Jeſus*, that by ſome means or other the moſt obſtinate hearts might be convinced, and thoſe tongues which blaſphemed him, might confeſs him to be the Lord.

A Prayer.

ALL thy works praiſe thee, O holy Jeſus, they all ſhow the greatneſs of thy power, and declare thee to be the Lord. All thy Saints therefore ought to bleſs thee, and to ſpeak good of thy Name: who didſt manifeſt forth thy glory in ſuch miraculous works upon Earth, and art now crowned with ſuch glory and honour in the Heavens. Great was the glory of that Almighty love, which gave health to the ſick, feet to the lame, eyes to the blind, and life to the dead. How gloriouſly didſt thou triumph over the Devil and all the

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powers of darkneſs: declaring thy ſelf to be the Redeemer of the World, by delivering thoſe who were oppreſſed by him? Great was thy Majeſty, and therefore greatly to be praiſed. Thoſe triumphs ought to have been attended with the moſt joyful ſhouts of Praiſe and Thankſgiving to thee, as the Saviour of men, and the Lord of Men and Angels. All that ſaw thy wonderful works, ought with never-ceaſing love, to have glorified thee, the great Lover of mankind, the Repairer of our ruines, the Reſtorer of our happineſs, our mighty Deliverer from all our Enemies, and the inexhauſtible Fountain of life and all other good things, which thou every where diſpenſedſt to them.

How ought all our hearts now to overflow with love to thee, the bleſſings of whoſe goodneſs ſo overflowed in all places, that none can tell the number of them? Eſpecially when we remember how by the mighty working of the ſame Spirit which glorified thee ſo on Earth; thou art raiſed from the dead, carried to Heaven, ſet at the right hand of God, and made the King of glory. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. *This is the ſovereign Balſam of all our wounds. This is our ſolace and comfort in the greateſt troubles. This raiſes our Spirits when they*

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are oppreſſed, and gives us life in death it ſelf. Be thou honoured and acknowledged by me and by all mankind, with the humbleſt, the moſt hearty and affectionate devotion to thy ſervice. Be thou ever praiſed, as much as thou waſt reproached and blaſphemed. Let thy Name be ſweet, and mentioned with delight and joy throughout all the World. Live, O bleſſed Jeſus, *in the glory wherein thou art inthroned. Sit and reign there, till all thine Enemies become thy foot-ſtool.* For among the Gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord: neither are there any works like unto thy works. All Nations whom thou haſt made ſhall come and worſhip before thee, O Lord; and ſhall glorifie thy Name. For thou art great, and haſt done wondrous things: Thou art Lord alone.

O give unto the Lord, ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and ſtrength. Aſcribe unto the Lord the glory due unto his name: O worſhip him in the beauty of holineſs. Say among the Heathen, the Lord reigneth: who was dead, but is alive again, and liveth for evermore. O ſing unto the Lord a new ſong, ſing unto the Lord all the Earth. Yea, ſing unto the Lord a new ſong, and worſhip

ſhip him all ye Gods. For thou Lord art high above all the Earth, thou art exalted far above all Gods.

Bleſſed is the people that know this joyful ſound: they ſhall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name ſhall they rejoyce all the day; and in thy righteouſneſs ſhall they be exalted. For thou art the glory of their ſtrength, and by thy favour ſhall we be highly honoured. For thou haſt a mighty arm, ſtrong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand. I know that thou canſt do every thing, and that no thought of thine can be hindred. *Thou canſt break the chains of death, and raiſe our duſt and aſhes to immortal life. Thou canſt tread Satan under our feet, and ſend thy Angels for our ſecurity and defence. By thee we ſhall run through the greateſt dangers, and ſurmount all the difficulties that are in our way to thee.* Who ſhall ſeparate us from thy love, O Chriſt: who diedſt for us, yea rather art riſen again, who art even at the right hand of God, who alſo makeſt interceſſion for us? O *live thou for ever in my mind and heart: and be the daily delightful ſubject of my thoughts. Direct and guide me in all my ways: and lead me ſafe unto thy ſelf. Still let my meditations of*

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thee be ſweet: and my joy exceeding great in thy ſalvation. Still fix mine eyes on things above, where thou art at Gods right hand. Lord, ſtill increaſe my Faith, that it growing in ſtrength may work by a more vigorous love. Let me feel the power of thy holy Spirit perpetually in my heart: that being led by the Spirit, and mortifying thereby the deeds of the body; He that raiſed thee up from the dead, may alſo quicken my mortal body, by his Spirit that dwelleth in me: Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that wrought ſuch wonders, unto him be glory in the Church by Chriſt *Jeſus*, throughout all ages, world without end. *Amen.*

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Concerning the Witneſs of the Holy APOSTLES of our Lord.

I Know not what remains to be done for the full explication of theſe words of the Apoſtle, unleſs it be fit to note that our Saviour is ſaid to COME not only in his own Perſon, but likewiſe in his Apoſtles and Evangeliſts. I need name but one place to prove this, ii. Epheſ. 17. *And* CAME, *and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.* It is well known that Jeſus (of whom he there ſpeaks) was *not* SENT *ſave to the loſt ſheep of the houſe of Iſrael:* and therefore in his own Perſon was not to go to thoſe who were afar off (ſuch Gentiles as theſe *Epheſians* were) to whom notwithſtanding he is ſaid here to COME.

He came unto his own (ſaith this very Diſciple) and though his own received him not, yet he kept himſelf within the confines of their Country; and charged his Diſciples, during his life, not to go into any City of the *Samaritans*: to whom he never went, but only in his paſſage from one part of the Jews Country to another. We can give no account then of his *COMING to them that were afar off*, as well as unto the Jews *who were nigh*, but only this; that by the Apoſtles whom *he* ſent, and who were *his* Embaſſadors to preach the glad tidings of Salvation, he was made known to the Gentiles; even as the Father is ſaid to *come* to the Jews and to ſpeak to them, when he ſent him, his Son, to declare his mind and will among them.

Now it is poſſible that S. *John* might have ſome reſpect to his ſending them (as the Father ſent him) to prove him to be the Son of God; when he ſaith that *Jeſus CAME by WATER and by BLOUD and by the SPIRIT*, and that theſe three were *his WITNESSES on Earth*. For firſt the Apoſtles were his WITNESSES; as they are called in many places, both by him and by themſelves. *Ye ſhall be WITNESSES*

NESSES unto me, both in Jeruſalem and in Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermoſt parts of the Earth, ſays our Saviour, juſt before his Aſcenſion, i. Act. 8. The ſame he ſaid to S. *Paul*, to whom he appeared afterward, xxvi. 16. xxii. 15. And in the ſame ſtile S. *Peter* ſpeaks of himſelf, *I exhort you, who am an Elder, and a WITNESS of the ſufferings of Chriſt*, i. Pet. v. 1. And as they were witneſſes of his *ſufferings*; ſo they were of all that he did (as you ſhall hear preſently) and of all that was done for him to prove that he was the Son of God, and the King of Glory. That is, they were witneſſes that there appeared ſuch witneſſes both in Heaven and Earth for him, as we have examined. And (2.) *witneſſes* they were of very great credit, worthy of all belief. For they were *WITNESSES choſen of God*, x. *Act.* 41. ſelect Men, pickt out by Heaven, ſome of them in an extraordinary manner, for this purpoſe. And they ſpake nothing by hear-ſay, but upon their own certain knowledge; being *eye-witneſſes of his Majeſty*, as ye have heard before from S. *Peter*, 2. i. 16. And S. *John* ſays the ſame in this Epiſtle, iv. 14. *We have ſeen, and do teſtifie, that the Father ſent the Son to be the Saviour of the World.* Firſt they ſaw, and then

bare witneſs: Or as he expreſſes himſelf more largely in the beginning of the Epiſtle, *That which they had heard, and ſeen with their eyes, and looked upon, and which their hands had handled of the Word of life (for it was manifeſt, and they ſaw it and bare WITNESS) that* (he repeats it again) *which they had ſeen and heard, they declared* unto the World. Why ſhould not ſuch witneſſes be believed; who ſpake nothing but what all their ſenſes, that could be imployed in this caſe, gave them full aſſurance was undoubtedly true? They were Men ſure of common capacity; and they had opportunity alſo to ſee and hear and feel and examine every thing, which Jeſus did, or was done in honour of him. For therefore our Saviour choſe them to be his *witneſſes*, becauſe they were thus qualified. xv. Joh. 26, 27. *When the Comforter is come, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He ſhall teſtify of me: And ye alſo ſhall bear WITNESS, becauſe ye have been with me from the BEGINNING.* That is, becauſe you are abundantly informed, how all things have paſſed, from my very firſt entring into the World to preach the Goſpel; therefore you ſhall be imployed to teſtifie all things that you have ſeen and heard and felt, as

the

the fitteſt perſons to be believed. For which reaſon, when they wanted one of their Number, by the apoſtaſie of *Judas*, they were very careful, according to this Rule of their Maſter, to chuſe ſuch an one to ſucceed him, as had been a conſtant follower of Jeſus, and had taken notice of every thing they were to witneſs. i. *Act.* 21, 22. *Wherefore ſaith S. Peter, of thoſe men which have companied with us, all the time that the Lord Jeſus went in and out among us, beginning from the Baptiſm of John unto that ſame day that he was taken up from us, muſt one be ordained to be a* WITNESS *with us of his Reſurrection.* See here how exact they were in their choice, that there might be no exception taken againſt their teſtimony, if any one ſhould ask them; Did you your ſelf *ſee*, or did you *hear* this, which you report? They would have none to take a part with them in this chief Miniſtry of the Goſpel, but ſuch an one as had been with them from firſt to laſt, and was able to anſwer to ſuch a queſtion upon his own certain knowledge, that all was true which he preached. From them the *Evangeliſts* received their Leſſon; who could ſay that they had theſe things which they reported, from thoſe very Men who were preſent

when they were ſpoken or done: And ſome of the *Evangeliſts* who were of the LXX. Diſciples choſen by our Saviour (x. *Luke* 1.) could affirm all upon the credit of their own ſight or hearing. But the other was ſufficient, as S. *Luke* thought; who undertaking to write the Hiſtory of our Saviour's Life and Death and Reſurrection (though he was none of the XII. Apoſtles) ſays, that he intended to declare thoſe things *which were moſt ſurely believed among them*, even as they were delivered to him, by thoſe Perſons, who *from the beginning*, *were EYE-WITNESSES and Miniſters of the Word.* i. 1, 2. Where it is obſervable, that as he would truſt only ſuch perſons as had been *eye-witneſſes*, ſo none but thoſe who had been ſuch witneſſes *from the beginning*. And (3.) what it was that they *witneſſed* (which is to be next conſidered) I have already told you in their own words, all that Jeſus did from the beginning, and particularly *his Reſurrection* which concluded all. This you may obſerve they teſtified to the *Jewes*, ii. *Act.* 22. 32. how God had honoured him by *Miracles, wonders and ſigns which he wrought by him in the very midſt of them, as they could not deny*: and *this Jeſus*, ſaith S. *Peter*, *hath God raiſed up*,

whereof

whereof we are all WITNESSES. And ſo he preached to the Gentiles, as I have noted before, x. 39. 41. *We are* WITNESSES *of all things which he did, &c. whom they ſlew and hanged on a Tree: Him God raiſed up the third day and ſhewed him openly unto* WITNESSES *choſen before of God, even unto us, who did eat and drink with him after he roſe from the dead.* And ſo does S. *Paul*, xiii. 30, 31. *But God raiſed him from the dead, and he was ſeen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jeruſalem, who are his* WITNESSES *unto the People.* He alledges their teſtimony, I ſuppoſe, rather than his own (though he alſo had ſeen the Lord, 1 *Cor.* xv. 8.) becauſe they had been with him *from the beginning*, which he had not: but *was born out of due time*, or was *an abortive*, as the word is well rendred in the Margin of that place now quoted. He was not formed, that is, and faſhioned as the reſt of the Apoſtles were under our Saviour's diſcipline, nor grew by leiſurely inſtruction in the Chriſtian Religion to the dignity of an Apoſtle; as Children come by degrees to perfection and maturity in their Mothers womb: but was thruſt into the Church on a ſudden, and by an heavenly violence, not in a regular way, made

an Apoſtle when he was not at all diſpoſed for it. Being born an Apoſtle therefore thus late (after *Chriſt*'s aſcenſion) and thus haſtily (before he was informed by any Teacher of Chriſtianity) he could not ſay that he had ſeen all the wonderful works of Chriſt when he was alive, or heard his Sermons, or received the hiſtory of them from eye and ear witneſſes. But all this was ſupplied by this one wonderful work of his converſion, in ſuch a manner as I formerly deſcribed, and by thoſe inſtructions which he received immediately from Jeſus himſelf. This was ſo ſtrange a thing that it made him one of his prime Miniſters; becauſe the Goſpel which he preached, *He neither received it of man, neither was he taught it, but by the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt.* Who ſo fully ſatisfied and inform'd him; that there was no need to conſult any mortal Creature, nor to go for inſtructions or authority to thoſe who were Apoſtles before him: but immediately he went about his buſineſs, and became *his WITNESS to all men, of what he had ſeen and heard*: as you may read, i. *Gal.* 12. 16, 17. xxii. *Act.* 15. And both He and the reſt (which is the chief thing to be conſidered) aſſerted that which they preached, that is, proved *Jeſus to be the Son of*

God

God with Power, all theſe ways by which S. *John* ſays our Saviour came, by WATER, by BLOUD, and by the SPIRIT: as will be evident, if I give you but a brief account of every one of theſe.

1. And as for the Holineſs and *purity* of their *Doctrine*, I have given you an abſtract of it before. By which it is apparent, they taught nothing but ſuch a love of God, as made thoſe that learnt it the greateſt and moſt vertuous lovers of all Mankind. Whom they purſued with kindneſſes, even when they hated them; and prayed for and bleſt, when they perſecuted them and drove them away, and would no longer receive any of their other kindneſſes. For they were inſtructed by the Apoſtles to bear all injuries with perfect patience; to be contented with the preſent, and truſt God for the future; to live peaceably with the worſt natur'd people, and to exerciſe the divineſt Friendſhip with thoſe who were good. Whom they taught to *be all of one mind*, as much as the beſt Husbands and Wives are, *to have compaſſion one of another*, *to be loving*, *pittiful and courteous*; as you may read in 1. Pet. iii. 7, 8.

The reſt of their Precepts were like theſe; and their *Lives* were correſpondent: as all the World knew, who could never charge them with any fault but this (as they accounted it) that they preached Jeſus. There was nothing appeared that could give the ſmalleſt ſuſpicion of any baſe or unworthy deſign, which they hid under pious and holy words. But their converſation had been very innocent and unblameable in the places where they lived, when they were *private* men. None could charge them with forgery, theft, covetouſneſs, or any other crime. But *S. Paul*, for inſtance, a moſt eminent Perſon among them, was of ſuch ſtrictneſs, during the time he was a *Jew*, that he was blameleſs, as to the righteouſneſs which their Law required. And when they were drawn out of their obſcure privacy, and ſent as *publick* perſons, to preach and act in the Name of Jeſus, they were ſo far from ſerving any worldly ends, that they took nothing for all their pains, nor demanded one farthing for any of their Cures. They were able not only to challenge all the world, as that great Prophet *Samuel* had done his Nation, that the man would come forth and witneſs againſt them,

them, and ſay, if he could, whom they had wronged; but of whom they had expected any gratuity for all their kindneſs to them. That was all that *Samuel* ſaid, *Whoſe Oxe or Aſs have I taken? whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppreſſed? or of whoſe hand have I received any bribe? and I will reſtore it you:* 1. xii. 3. And *Moſes*, in that great rebellion againſt him, xvi. *Num.* 15. thinks it ſufficient to purge himſelf in the ſame manner, ſaying, *I have not taken one Aſſe from them, nor hurt one of them.* But *S. Paul* makes a more noble proteſtation, ſaying, *I have COVETED no mans ſilver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, you your ſelves know, that theſe hands have miniſtred unto my neceſſities, and to them that were with me,* xx. *Act.* 33, 34. Here was Vertue; which made him ſo far even from deſiring any thing of others, that he choſe by his own hard labour to be both his own benefactor, and his Families. And what he affirms of himſelf, he alſo tells us was the pious inclination of ſeveral of his Companions; ſuch as *Silvanus*, and *Timotheus.* Whoſe exhortation, the *Theſſalonians* knew, *was not of deceit, nor of uncleanneſs, nor of guile; for they ſtudied not to pleaſe men, but God. Unto whom they appeal as their Witneſs, that they never*

ver uſed any flattering words, nor ſought to inrich themſelves, or to advance their own glory, as you read, 1 *Theſſ.* ii. 3, 4, 5. And *they were witneſſes*, he adds, verſ. 10. *as well as God, how holily, and juſtly and unblameably, yea, how lovingly* (as it follows verſ. 11.) *they behaved themſelves among them.*

Now what ſhould tempt ſuch pious Men, who ſo much deſpiſed worldly goods, and ſought not to get any credit to themſelves, to preach that *Jeſus was the Son of God*; if they had not been very ſure of this truth, which was the conſtant matter of their Sermons, throughout the World? Is it likely that ſuch Men ſhould feign a ſtory of things, which they never heard nor ſaw? that all their talk of voices from Heaven, and Miracles, and appearances of Jeſus to them after he was dead, were only devices and contrivances of their own brain? For what end, I beſeech you, ſhould they invent them? If their tongues were ſo well hung, and they were ſo eloquent as to hope to perſwade the world to be of their mind, it had been wiſdome to have imployed them more for their own gain and advantage; and not to have preached ſuch a ſtrange and unprofitable Doctrine

as

as this of the crucified Jeſus. There were far eaſier tasks to undertake than this, and which would have turn'd to a better account here on earth: and therefore they who had ſo much wit as to invent, would have let this alone; had they not known it to be both ſure and undoubted, and alſo worthy of all their pains to reveal it, that this crucified Jeſus was the Son of God.

But beſides this it ought to be conſidered, that from the very beginning our Saviour had taught them to be content with a mean and poor kind of life, when he ſent them forth to preach in *Judæa*. *Go*, ſays he, x. *Matth.* 7. 9, 10. *preach and ſay, the Kingdom of God is at hand.* Freely you have received, freely give. Provide neither gold, nor ſilver, nor ſo much as a braſs token in your purſes; nor ſcrip for your Journey; neither two Coats; neither ſhoes, nor yet ſtaves. For the Workman is worthy of his Meat: and eat ſuch things as they ſet before you. That is, be not curious; and, doubt not of it, God will provide for you. Was it likely that men thus bred, to ſo great plainneſs, ſimplicity, contentedneſs, and dependence on God, ſhould go about to abuſe the world with falſe ſto-

ries?

ries? Nay, before they came to him, their education and way of life was ſo low and poor; that they were the unfitteſt men in the world to deviſe and make *Romances*, if they ſhould have had a mind to it. This was the very thing, the Heathens objected to them, that they were illiterate, not trained up in ſtudy, but got their living many of them, *Piſcatorio artificio*, as they ſpeak in *Lactantius*, by the trade and labour of fiſhing. Of which He makes this advantage very juſtly, in his reply to them,

* *Lib.* 3. *Inſtit. c.* 3. *Abfuit ergo ab his fingendi voluntas* *, &c. "You muſt needs confeſs therefore that "theſe Men had not the inclination, nor "the craft to contrive and feign ſuch a ſto- "ry as this; becauſe they were ſo rude. "Or what unlearned Man is there, that "can deviſe things ſo coherent, and that "ſute ſo well one with another? ſince e- "ven the moſt excellent of all your Philo- "ſophers, as we ſee plainly, have involved "themſelves in many contradictions; and "ſpoken things contrary and repugnant to "what they have elſewhere delivered. "*For this is the nature of lies, that they* "*never hang well together.* One end of "the tale, is wont to diſcover the falſe- "neſs of the other. But what they deli- "ver, *undique quadrat*, perfectly agrees

"with

" with it ſelf from top to bottom, becauſe
" it is true, and no device of their own.
" And then he adds (which is the greateſt
" evidence that can be of their honeſty)
" they could not invent this for the ſake of
" any thing in this world, (and without
" ſome ſuch reſpect what ſhould incline
" them to invent it) for as much as they
" both taught and followed that courſe of
" life which regarded not ſenſual pleaſures,
" and undervalued thoſe things, which the
" world admires and cries up for goods;
" and likewiſe they dyed for the Faith,
" which was not the effect of a raſh and
" ſudden fit of zeal, for they knew very
" well and foretold they ſhould dye upon
" this account; and they alſo reſolvedly
" ſuffered the moſt cruel and ſharpeſt tor-
" ments that could be deviſed before they
" dyed; and they took it all patiently,
" nay gave God thanks that they were
" counted worthy to ſuffer for the Name
" of Jeſus.

But this belongs to the Teſtimony of their BLOUD. To which before I proceed, let me obſerve that the Apoſtles were not only men of great knowledge in the things of God, and very innocent and holy in their lives; but they were men extraordinarily

dinarily qualified in both thoſe regards: and therefore are the more to be believed, in what they ſay they *ſaw* or *heard*. For what Philoſopher ever ſpake ſo plainly and clearly of all things that concern the amendment of Mankind, or gave them ſuch hopes in the World to come, without which it was not likely they ſhould amend, as theſe poor Fiſhermen did? They wanted nothing but their eloquence, which they purpoſely avoided; becauſe they would have naked truth prevail by its own force and by the power of God; and not by thoſe ornaments and dreſſings, which had been ſo often imployed to commend falſhood to the World. Setting this aſide, there was no compariſon between the Doctrine of the Apoſtles, and that which had been formerly publiſhed. They comprehended in a few plain and ſimple words, more than all that could be found here and there ſcattered in the vaſt Volumes of the Philoſophers. Nay, they advanced the ſence of the Law of *Moſes*. They called Men to the nobleſt degree of purity. For they cleanſed and ſcowred them from all filthineſs, not only of the fleſh, but alſo of the ſpirit. They advanced the buſineſs of holy living to ſuch a pitch, that ſome ſaid it was impoſſible

to

to be ſo good. And what did they do now? How did they overcome this objection? This is the greateſt marvel of all, and gave their teſtimony a mighty force: they ſhow'd by their own example that it was poſſible. This, ſays *Lactantius*, made the Philoſophers miſcarry in their deſign, that though they ſpake well, yet they did not live as they taught. *For men had rather have examples than words:* Becauſe it is eaſie to talk, and hard to do. Our Saviour therefore and his Apoſtles convinced men by their actions; that *if they would not follow one that taught them, they might follow one that went before them.* They guided them by their feet and not only by their tongues; they led their hearers the way, in all manner of vertuous and godly living. Nay, they refuſed ſometimes, to do thoſe things which they might lawfully, that all men might ſee their upright meaning, and that they had no worldly deſign in their head. So S. *Paul* tells the *Corinthians*, that whereas he might have lived upon the Goſpel and expected maintenance from them; yet he choſe to preach freely, and *make the Goſpel without charge*, that it might have an eaſier paſſage into their hearts, 1 Cor. ix. 12. 18. And thus he did at *Theſſalonica* alſo, where he *wrought*

with labour and travel Night and Day, that he might not be chargeable to any of them: Not becauſe he had not power to do otherwiſe, *but to make himſelf an example unto them to follow him*, 2 Theſſ. iii. 8, 9. And ſuch was his practice, you heard before, at *Epheſus*, xx. *Act.* 34. So that one would think he had taken up this generous reſolution, at the very firſt, which he continued every where, not to make the ſmalleſt advantage by the Goſpel of which he was a Miniſter. It might have been ſufficient, one would think that he laboured in the Goſpel, and took pains to convert ſouls: He needed not have laboured alſo for his living, but expected food from thoſe whom he fed with the bread of life. But to make his Miniſtry unexceptionable, and to ſhow he intended nothing in the World, but to bring men to this belief in Jeſus; he would not ſo much as ſupport himſelf by their contributions, but by the labour of his own hands provided both for himſelf and for others too, as he tells the *Epheſian* Elders, who were inſtruments with him of their Salvation. Can there be any ſuſpicion of the ſincerity of ſuch a Man as this? What could he have in his mind but this one thing, to win Diſciples to his Maſter? And could he doubt, think you, of his

power

power to reward him for all his labour? He was no fool it is plain, but underſtood himſelf as well as the wiſeſt of us all. What ſhould make him then neglect all other intereſts, and bend his mind wholly to ſerve *Jeſus?* Such noble ſpirits as his were the unlikelieſt of all other to cheat and deceive, whoſe only buſineſs it was to take pains, that they might give to others. And men of ſuch wiſdom would not have taken all that pains, for no other end, but merely to perſwade others to believe in *Jeſus*, if they had not been as ſure that he was the *Son of God*, as it was that they ſhould get nothing by preaching it, but ſtripes, impriſonments, infamy, reproaches, and perhaps loſe their lives to the bargain. And what ſhould make men ſo prodigal of their bloud think you?

II. That's now fit to be conſidered in the next place; their ſharp ſufferings, the BLOUD whereby our Saviour CAME, (that is, was proved to be the *Chriſt*) when he was preached by their Miniſtery. No ſooner did they appear, but all the world with its whole power armed it ſelf againſt them. As the *Jews* under pretence of Religion oppoſed and perſecuted them; ſo when they fled into other Coun-

tries, the *Philoſophers* upon the ſame ſcore, ſet their wits againſt them, and ſummoned all their Learning and their Arts of reaſoning to diſpute this new Doctrine out of doors. To whoſe aſſiſtance came the *Sophiſters* and *Rhetoricians*, who imployed all their quirks and their eloquence to make it ſeem ridiculous. Nor did the *Magicians* and Juglers, with all the *Dæmons*, the then Lords of the world, forget to oppoſe it with all their might. But excited Kings, and Preſidents, and Magiſtrates to exerciſe all kind of cruelties, not only againſt the preachers of this Religion, but againſt their followers. The Edicts of Princes thundred out nothing but confiſcations, proſcriptions, baniſhments, impriſonments, rods, axes, ſtrapadoes, croſſes, fire, wild-Beaſts: ſo that we may ſay of them all, as it was ſaid of S. *Paul* and *Barnabas*, who were *men that hazarded their lives for the name of the* Lord Jeſus, xv. *Acts.* 26. Men *ſet forth, appointed unto death* (as thoſe that fought with wild-Beaſts) *and made a ſpectacle unto the World, and to Angels and Men*, 1 Cor. iv. 9. *Even unto this preſent hour* (ſays S. *Paul* in the following verſes) *we both hunger and thirſt, and are naked, and are buffetted, and have no certain dwelling*

ling place; and labour working with our own hands: being reviled we bleſs: being perſecuted, we ſuffer it: being defamed, we intreat (God for them:) *we are made as the filth of the World, and are the off-ſcouring of all things unto this day.* And as they were long thus vilely uſed and deſtined to death, ſo at laſt every one of them, together with other great ſervants of *Jeſus* Chriſt, actually ſuffered death in juſtification of this truth, that he was the *Son of God.* S. *Steven* led the way, who is called the *Martyr of Jeſus,* having ſhed his *Bloud* for him, xxii. *Acts* 20. And he that calls him ſo, proteſts that he was *ready not only to be bound, but alſo to die at Jeruſalem for his name,* xxi. 13. Nay, when he ſpeaks of the Martyrdom of S. *Steven,* he was in the hands of his enraged enemies, who were ready to ſtone him too, and began to prepare themſelves for it, as you may read there xxii. 23. And both before and after this he was perſecuted with ſuch violent and bitter zeal, that his whole life was a kind of death, which he ſuffered over and over again for his Maſters cauſe. Which makes him ſay, when he gives a large catalogue of his ſufferings, that he was *in deaths often,* 2 *Cor.* xi. 23, 25. and proteſt, in another place, that *he died daily,* 1 *Cor.*

xv. 31. and in another, that he was *alway delivered unto death for Jeſus's ſake*, and that *death wrought in him*, that he might make others live, 2 *Cor.* iv. 11, 12. More than this you find in xvii. *Rev.* 5, 6. that the mother of harlots, that one City *Babylon*, was even *drunk with the* BLOUD *of the Saints, and with the* BLOUD *of the* MARTYRS *of Jeſus*. A Sea of BLOUD flowed from their veins, to cover the Earth with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord; for whoſe cauſe they ſuffered themſelves to be ſlain, as ſo many innocent ſheep that make no reſiſtance. This gave them the name of MARTYRS, in Engliſh WITNESSES, becauſe *they were beheaded for the* WITNESS *of Jeſus, and for the Word of God*, xx. *Rev.* 4. that is, they conſtantly affirmed him to be the LORD, and choſe rather to die and ſeal it with their BLOUD, than not preach this Truth; for which S. *John* alſo was now an Exile in a deſolate place, 1 *Rev.* 9.

What was it, think you, that made them thus hot and eager to be the moſt miſerable of all mankind? to deſpoil themſelves of all the comforts of life, and to endure perpetually the pains of death?

From

From what cauſe was it, that their bloud thus boiled in their veins, and they were ſo zealouſly forward to have it let out? It could be nothing but only this, that they loved *Jeſus* ardently, and were extremely deſirous, if he thought it beſt to die in his ſervice: knowing that he would hear the cry of their *bloud*, and reward them abundantly for all their ſufferings. S *John* beheld the *Souls of thoſe who were ſlain for the Word of God, and the* TESTIMONY *which they held, under the Altar*, vi. *Rev.* 9. which ſignifies that they were ſacrifices to God, when they witneſſed thus unto *Jeſus*. For by *Souls* in the language of the old Scriptures, is often meant the *Bloud*, *i. e.* the life, which here was repreſented at the foot of the Altar, where the bloud of the ſacrifice uſed to be poured out. They died in an holy cauſe, they were very well aſſured, and ſhould be an offering well-pleaſing, and of a ſweet ſavour unto God; elſe they would never have thus willingly offered their throats to the ſacrificing knife of their bloudy perſecutors. No, when it came to that, they would have confeſt the truth ſure, if they had not preached it before. A few of their ſufferings would have taught them more wit than *to loſe their heads for the teſtimony of*

Jeſus; if they had not been verily perſwaded they were in the right, and ought to be his WITNESSES even with their bloud. The ſcoffs of the Heathen would have been very reaſonable, if they had not dealt ſincerely, and been certain their Teſtimony was the Truth. Who were wont to ſay, as we read in *Minutius*, *Nec reſurgitis miſeri, nec interim vivitis*, Miſerable wretches! you do but fancy you ſhall riſe again, and in the mean time you do not live. You are hungry, and pale, and enjoy none of the pleaſures of life; and have no hope of being better you are dead. To which, he replies, after a long demonſtration of the evidence they had of what they believed, *Ita beati reſurgimus, & futuri contemplatione jam vivimus*, So you ſee we ſhall riſe again to bleſſedneſs, and we live now in the bliſsful contemplation of it. Yea, they not only *lived*, but they *rejoyced*: and more than that, they *gloried* in tribulations. Which they could not have done, had not their integrity been as great as this confidence, and their ſincere intentions upheld and ſupported their boldneſs. Which was the greater, you may be ſure, becauſe as they bare *witneſs* to *Jeſus*, ſo *God bare WITNESS to them*, as you read expreſly, ii. *Heb.* 4.

both

both with ſigns and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, according to his will: whereby he teſtified to them that they were honeſt men, and did not *cunningly follow deviſed fables, when they made known to men the power and coming of our* Lord *Jeſus Chriſt, but were,* as the profeſſed, *eye-witneſſes of his Majeſty.* Which is the next thing to be conſidered.

III. Hitherto I have only proved that they had all things neceſſary to make them *credible witneſſes,* being void of guile, and ſuch as could not be reaſonably ſuppoſed to be mere inventors of what they preached. Men who both knew what they ſaid, and did not ſpeak contrary to their knowledge. Nay, men of eminent knowledge, ſanctity and zeal, which made them more than *common witneſſes.* But ſtill they were only *humane* Witneſſes, not *divine:* nor could all this put it quite out of doubt, and give a full aſſurance, that what they ſaid was true; but only that they thought it to be true, and were not likely to be deceived. And therefore that they and thoſe who heard their teſtimony, might be ſure, and have infallible proofs (as S. *Lukes* words are) that they were

not

not deceived; and that the faith which relied upon their teſtimony might be Divine: there followed the *Witneſs of the SPIRIT*, which accompanied them, as it had done our Saviour; together with the Witneſs of the HOLY GHOST, which he had promiſed to ſend them, that they might be his *Witneſſes* in all the world. This was an undoubted evidence that they were men ſent of God upon this meſſage, to preach *Jeſus*, and teſtifie that he was the Lord of all. This made the faith of thoſe who heard and believed them, to be more than an humane perſwaſion, becauſe it relied not only on the word of men, but upon the teſtimony of the Spirit of God. It might have been a very ſtrong faith without this, becauſe the men who reported it were perſons of great vertue, void of all fraud, or worldly deſign: but it could not have been Divine, had not this Witneſs come and joyned its teſtimony with theirs. For they would but have received the teſtimony of very pious and good men: it was no more, till the teſtimony of God himſelf came, in ſuch ſigns, wonders, miracles and various gifts, as you have heard already, and as you read of in many other places. *They went forth* (ſaith S. *Mark*, ſpeaking of all the Apoſtles)

Apoſtles) *and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the Word* (which they preached) *with ſigns following*, xvi. 20. All places were filled with wonder, as they were with the HOLY GHOST. At *Jeruſalem*, for inſtance, S. *Steven* as well as the Apoſtles, *full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people*, vi. *Acts* 8. In *Samaria* S. *Philip* preached Chriſt, *and the people with one accord gave heed to the things which he ſpake, hearing and ſeeing the miracles which he did; for unclean Spirits crying with a loud voice, came out of many that were poſſeſſed with them, and many taken with palſies, and that were lame were healed*, viii. 6, 7. And at *Theſſalonica* S. *Paul* tells them that *his Goſpel came not in word only, but alſo in power, and in the Holy Ghoſt, and in much aſſurance.* And at *Iconium* both he and *Barnabas* ſtai'd a long time, *ſpeaking boldly in the Lord, who gave teſtimony unto the Word of his grace, and granted ſigns and wonders to be done by their hands*, xiv. 3. And in the ſame manner, at *Corinth*, *Coloſſe*, *Philippi*, and all other places, the Divine power *wrought in them mightily*, i. *Coloſ.* 29. upon which account they call themſelves, with great reaſon, *Witneſſes OF GOD*, 1 *Cor.* xv.

14,

14, 15. *If Chriſt be not riſen, our preaching is vain, yea, and we are found falſe witneſſes of God* (which had been a moſt horrible thing) *becauſe we have teſtified OF GOD, that he raiſed up Chriſt.* They teſtified every where what God had done by *Jeſus* and for him; particularly that he had raiſed him from the dead. Now that they did not take upon them to be *Gods Witneſſes*, when they had received no authority from him, nor were guilty of belying God (as the phraſe κατὰ θεὸν imports) the Spirit that wrought in them evidently proved, by the gifts of Languages, of Prophecy, of Wiſdom and Knowledge, of Miracles, and healing all manner of Diſeaſes. Which made the Angel ſay, when S. *John* was going to worſhip him, by no means, ſee thou do it not: I am but thy fellow ſervant, one of thy Brethren that *bears witneſs* to *Jeſus* as thou doſt: *For the teſtimony of Jeſus is the ſpirit of prophecy*, xix. *Rev.* 10. that is, thoſe gifts which the Apoſtles were endued withal, ſhowed whoſe miniſters they were, and that being the ſervants of the moſt High God, as well as the Angels, they owed no ſuch reſpect to them as S. *John* was about to give: and by thoſe Divine gifts they gave a *teſtimony* to *Jeſus*, and proved he was the

Son

Son of God; wherein they were equal to the Angels, who could no more than teſtifie to him, and be his miniſters to report the glory wherein he was. Upon which errand not only this, but many other Angels appeared to S. *John*, who, together with the reſt of the Apoſtles, *bare record of the Word of God*, as I have noted before, *and of the teſtimony of Jeſus, and of all things that he ſaw*, i. *Rev.* 3. And herein they were *labourers together with God*, (1 *Cor.* iii. 9.) who teſtified the ſame, and *wrought as effectually* in S. *Peter* among the *Jews*, as he was *mighty in* S. Paul *towards the Gentiles*, ii. *Gal.* 8. For *God wrought ſpecial miracles by his hands*, xix. *Acts* 11. *and made the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, through mighty ſigns and wonders, by the power of the* SPIRIT *of God*, xv. *Rom.* 18, 19. So that the Faith of that Age, it is plain, *did not ſtand in the wiſdom of men* (as S. *Paul* ſpeaks, 1 *Cor.* ii. 5.) *but in the power of God.* They that believed ſaw evidently that God was with the Apoſtles: nay, they felt, many of them, the power of God in themſelves, as you have heard before; when the Apoſtles communicated this vertue to others, which they had received from *Jeſus* Chriſt. Which was ſuch a *Teſtimony* to him,

him, as no counterfeit or falſe witneſs could ever imitate.

For it hath been a conſtant obſervation, that they who by Magick aſtoniſhed the People by wonderful feats, not only did them for their own gain and reputation, rather than for any benefit to the World; but alſo kept this ſecret to themſelves, and would not communicate their power to others. That would have ſpoiled their trade, and made them leſs admired, or at leaſt, leſs rich than they deſigned. But our Lord, on the contrary, had promiſed his Diſciples, that what he did when he was in the world, they ſhould do alſo, after he was gone. Nay, more than that, he tells them, *Greater things ſhall ye do.* And which is ſtill more, he promiſes that not only they, but others alſo ſhould do thoſe works, if they believed on him. xiv. Joh. 11, 12. *Believe me for the very works ſake. Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do, ſhall he do alſo, and greater works than theſe ſhall he do; becauſe I go to my Father.* Now thus it came to paſs, as our Saviour foretold. Not only the Apoſtles, but others alſo who believed through their word, received the Holy Ghoſt. For as S. *Peter* confidently

invited

invited his Crucifiers, to come and repent of what they had done, and be baptized *every one of them* in his Name, and they ſhould *receive the gift of the Holy Ghoſt*, ii. *Act.* 38. So it proved, that they who gladly received his word, were baptized, (*ver.* 41.) *and were all filled with the Holy Ghoſt*: iv. 31. This was the thing that amazed that famous Sorcerer *Simon Magus*, whom the *Samaritans* admired as *the great power of God*, till S. *Philip* came thither, and perſwaded even him, by the miracles and ſigns which he did, to believe in Jeſus, as a greater power of God than himſelf. But when the Apoſtles alſo came, and by laying on of their hands the Holy Ghoſt was given to ſeveral perſons; He plainly ſaw that he was no body, and would have given any Money for ſuch a power, as he had not the leaſt ſhadow of. viii. *Act.* 10, 11, *&c.*

But all that I ſhall ſay of this matter, ſhall be out of one of the ancient defenders of the Chriſtian cauſe: who thought he might challenge all the world to ſhow him any thing like that which our Saviour did; or give an account how it might be done, if he was not the Son of God moſt high. It is *Arnobius* I mean, who in his firſt Book againſt

againſt the Gentiles, having delivered in a Catalogue of our Saviour's miracles, and ſhown they could not be the effect of Magick; at laſt concludes with this great demonſtration, the ſubſtance of which I ſhall briefly relate. All theſe wonders which I have ſummed up, though not as the greatneſs of them required, Jeſus not only performed himſelf; but, which is a greater miracle, gave many others power to do them in his Name. For he fore-ſeeing there would be indeavours to detract from the glory of his famous actions, that he might leave no ſuſpicion in the minds of thoſe that heard of him, as if he were a Sorcerer, choſe out of that vaſt multitude of People that followed him with no ſmall admiration, certain Fiſhermen, poor Labourers, and other Country People; who going through all Nations might, without any tricks, falſe colours, or invoking the aſſiſtance of Spirits, work all thoſe miracles over again, which they ſaid he had wrought himſelf. As *He* commanded Devils to come out with a word of his mouth; in the ſame manner did *they* lay their commands upon them, and they obeyed. As He did but put forth his hand and touch a Leper, or bid him be clean, and his fleſh was reſtored like a little Childs; in the

ſame

ſame manner did *they* ſmooth the skins of ſuch loathſome perſons, and reſtore them to the welcome ſociety of their friends and neighbours. It would be too tedious to number all things particularly that they did; and which is more (I may add) gave power to other Chriſtians to do in their Maſter's Name. They ſtopt the progreſs of cruel eating Cancers; they cloſed up *Ulcera oris immenſi*, wide and very gaping Ulcers; they gave feet to the lame, eyes to the blind, and life to the dead. Nor was there any thing, that aſtoniſhed all beholders, done by him; which he did not ſubject to the power of theſe infants, theſe ruſticks, and gave them authority to do it. What ſay you now, O ye incredulous, ye hard, ye obſtinate hearts? Did your *Jupiter* himſelf ever give any mortal man ſuch power? Did he ever ſo much as beſtow upon his High-Prieſt, upon the moſt ſacred of all his High-Prieſts, I will not ſay the power to raiſe a dead man, or make a blind man ſee; but ſo much as to make a wheal or a pimple ſink down and lye even with the skin, by ſpeaking a word; or cure a little cleft, which a looſe skin ſometimes makes in the fingers end, only by touching it, or bidding it be angry no longer? And was it an humane power then

from which ſuch great things as I have told you of,proceeded? Sure it was ſacred, ſure it was Divine: or if you will admit any more ſuperlative expreſſion, it was more than Divine, more than Sacred. For when thou doſt that which thou art able to do, and which is proportionable to thy power and ſtrength, there is no ſuch reaſon that admiration ſhould cry out: thou didſt that which thou hadſt ſtrength to do, and which one might expect from ſuch a power. But now to be able to transfer thy right and power to another, and to make a frail weak creature do that,which is proportionable to thy might alone; this is the effect of a power which is above all, and which contains in it the cauſes of all things, and the natures of all faculties. Go then and fetch us *Zoroaſtres*, that great Magician you brag of, through the torrid zone; or go and bring hither the Armenian that *Cteſias* writ of; nay ſummon *Apollonius*, *Damigero*,*Dardanus*,and all the reſt of your moſt eminent wonder-workers that ever were; let them be gathered together and joyn their forces, and let us ſee them give but one of the common people power to command by a plain word, a dumb man to ſpeak, or a man whoſe arms and leggs are withered to work and walk. Or if this

be

be too difficult a thing, to make another do this, and do it with a ſimple command, let us ſee any of them do it themſelves. And let them call in the aſſiſtance of all their Dæmons, let them gather all the magical herbs which they can find in the boſome of the Earth, and come with the whole power of their murmuring words, and with all their charms (we will except none of them, we forbid them nothing that they can get to aid them) and let them try, if with the help of all their gods to boot, they can do any ſuch thing as theſe poor ruſtick Chriſtians effected, *nudis juſſionibus*, by their naked and bare command. Ceaſe, O ye ignorant ſouls, therefore to ſcoff and to curſe when ye hear of theſe things: which cannot hurt him at all, but will bring no ſmall prejudice to your ſelves. For the Soul is a precious thing; nothing ought to be ſo dear to a Man as that: which is in hazard by blaſpheming Chriſt. Who is no ſuch contemptible perſon that you may laugh at him, but, as appears by theſe things, *Deus ille ſublimis*, &c. *That High God, God of God, God from unknown Kingdomes, God ſent by the moſt High to be the Saviour; whom neither the Sun himſelf, nor the brighteſt Stars, (if they have any ſenſe) nor the Principalities and Rulers*

of the World, no, nor your great Gods, or thoſe who feigning themſelves to be Gods terrifie all mankind with their formidable power, could ſo much as know or ſuſpect whence, or what he was, he is ſo great. But now that it is known, and he hath demonſtrated it to the World by his Divine works; you had beſt ſubmit to him, and not imagine he is but one of us.

And that truly is good counſel for us all; to acknowledge Jeſus to be the Lord, and, ſubmitting our ſelves to his authority, to be governed by his Laws: which God from Heaven confirmed by the moſt miraculous operations of the Spirit, and of the Holy Ghoſt. It is true we do not ſee and hear thoſe things, of which the Apoſtles and they that lived in their days were ſpectators and auditors: but we have the faithful records of thoſe miraculous works and of their Sermons left by themſelves. Regiſters were delivered under the unqueſtionable hands of thoſe divine men, of what they had ſeen and heard, and of what they themſelves ſaid and did. That is, the Teſtimony of the Apoſtles, and the Teſtimony of God was preſerved and kept in the Holy Books; which ſpake the ſame to the next Age, which their Fathers had

ſeen

ſeen with their eyes and heard with their ears in the Age foregoing. And moreover, for a further confirmation, that theſe were the lively Oracles of God (his word tranſmitted unto them, on which they might rely) they had a continuance of the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt for ſome Ages following. As *Juſtin Martyr* and *Tertullian* witneſs for the ſecond Age after our Saviour: And *Origen*, *Minutius*, *Arnobius* and *Lactantius* (to name no more in ſucceeding times) witneſs for the third and part of the fourth. How could they doubt of the truth of the reports which they had received, when they beheld them ſtill verified, as much as was neceſſary, in their own days; by the teſtimony of God himſelf? And as for the incredulous Gentiles who ſtopt their ears to theſe reports, they preſſed them very ſtrongly in this manner (to uſe the words that follow in *Arnobius*) as we may do thoſe who queſtion or disbelieve the Evangelical Hiſtory in our own Age. "Will you not believe good witneſſes of "things that were done, unleſs you ſee "them done your ſelves? Shall Authors "of certain credit be rejected; who re- "ceived ſuch things themſelves and deli- "vered them to their poſterity to be be- "lieved, with no ſmall approbation? You

"will ſay, who are thoſe? I anſwer,
"whole Countries, People, Nations, all
"that incredulous race of mankind, are
"our Witneſſes and the Authors we pro-
"duce. Who would never have enter-
"tained theſe things, unleſs they had been
"clearer, as we ſay, than the light. Do
"you think that the men of that time
"were ſuch vain lying fools, ſuch ſots,
"ſuch brutes, that they feigned and ima-
"gined they ſaw ſuch things as they never
"ſaw? and that they childiſhly affirmed
"ſuch things were done, when there was
"nothing like it? and when they might
"have lived with you in good eſteem, and
"contracted alliances and kindred among
"you, would chuſe to become the pub-
"lick hatred, and to make their very
"name execrable, without any reaſon for
"it? If this ſtory be falſe, whence comes
"all the world to be filled ſo ſoon with
"this Religion? Or how was it brought
"about that ſo many people, in ſuch di-
"ſtant Countries, and of ſuch different
"humours, ſhould all conſpire and agree
"together to believe it? Were they
"drawn away with mere words? And
"with the danger of their lives followed a
"poor deſpicable Preacher, when they
"ſaw nothing that was wonderful or
ſtrange,

" ſtrange, to perſwade them to this wor-
" ſhip? What vain, ſenſeleſs imaginations
" are theſe? Therefore they believed, and
" ſuffered themſelves to be torn in pieces
" rather than deny it; becauſe they ſaw all
" theſe things done by him, and by his
" Preachers: who were ſent through the
" whole world to carry the benefits of our
" Father to mankind, and to beſtow the
" gifts of healing both on their Souls and
" Bodies.

" But our Writers have not ſet theſe
" things down faithfully. They have ex-
" tolled ſmall matters, and ambitiouſly
" magnified them beyond their juſt propor-
" tions. Why ſo, I beſeech you? By
" what reaſon ſhall we believe any of your
" writings, if this Hiſtory of ours muſt be
" rejected? In which but a few things,
" of the many that were done, are record-
" ed by men of truth and honeſty. Did
" any God come down from Heaven, and
" write with his own hand, the ſtories
" that you believe? Or is there any thing
" of that nature writ againſt ours? Then
" you believe men, and ſo do we. Your
" Books were writ by men, and ſo were
" ours. And whatſoever you will ſay of

" ours, look for the ſame to be retorted " upon your own. Will you have all " things contained in your writings to be " true? ſo are all contained in ours. Do " you ſay ours are falſe? the ſame we ſay " of yours. And how will you help your " ſelves? You cannot ſay that you ſaw the " things that you believe, no more than " we: But others ſaw them, and there- " fore you believe them, and ſo do we. " But ours were writ by rude and unlearn- " ed men, and therefore not to be belie- " ved? Conſider if this be not an advan- " tage to our cauſe, and a ſtronger reaſon " to conclude that theſe writings are ſtain- " ed with no lies, but delivered with a " ſimple mind, ignorant how to amplifie " things, and ſo ſet them off with deceit- " ful dreſſes. As for that which follows concerning the trivial ſordid ſtile, where- in they ſaid the Apoſtles writ, it does not in the leaſt render the faithfulneſs of their relations ſuſpected: and therefore I paſs it over and omit his reply to it; though I cannot well neglect this pertinent obſerva- tion of *Eraſmus* in his Preface to his Para- phraſe upon S. *Lukes* Goſpel. " The lan- " guage, ſays he, of the Goſpel is ſo ſimple " and rude, that if any body compare it " with the Hiſtory of *Thucydides* or *Livy*, " he

" he will want abundance of things, and " be offended at as many. How many " things do the Evangeliſts paſs by? How " many do they but juſt touch in two or " three words? In how many places do " they diſagree in the order of their Narra- " tion; and in how many others do they " ſeem to thwart one another? Theſe " things might make a Reader leſs like " them, and not give ſuch credit to what " he reads. For on the contrary, they " that wrote humane Hiſtories, how ſoli- " citous were they about their entrance " upon their work? How ſcrupulouſly " did they weigh their words? What " care did they imploy to obſerve a decent " order, to ſet down nothing but what " was plauſible and exactly deſcribed? " And with what art do they endeavour to " ſet things lively before our eyes? With " what pleaſures do they intice and detain " the minds of the Readers, that they may " not at all grow weary of them? And " yet theſe elaborate Monuments, for the " greateſt part, are loſt; and thoſe that re- " main are not read with any aſſurance " that they report nothing but the truth. " For who is ſo credulous, as to believe " that *Titus Livius* tells never a tale in his " Hiſtory? But there are millions of men

" found,

"found, who had rather die ten times,
"than think there is one ſentence falſe in
"the Evangelical ſtory? Is it not plain
"by this, that it is not a buſineſs of hu-
"mane power and prudence, but conduct-
"ed by a Divine vertue? What Philoſo-
"pher is there that ever had the confidence
"to propound ſuch Paradoxes as theſe,
"with hope to be believed? That one *Je-*
"*ſus* was crucified, and by his death ſa-
"ved mankind; that he was God and
"Man, born of a Virgin; that he roſe
"again from the dead, and ſits at the right
"hand of God the Father; that he taught,
"they were bleſſed men who mourned,
"hungred and thirſted, were afflicted,
"ill-ſpoken of, and killed for the profeſſi-
"on of his name; and that one day they
"ſhould live again, and ſee him ſit in
"judgment to give immortality to the pi-
"ous, and endleſs pains to the ungodly.
"What is there plauſible and taking in all
"this? And yet the humble low ſtile of
"the Goſpel perſwaded men of this, ſo
"that thouſands, millions, will rather
"forſake their lives than this plain truth;
"which a few private, unknown, poor,
"mean diſciples of his delivered to the
"World.

What

What ſhould move us then to diſtruſt theſe records of the faithful WITNESSES of Chriſt, which are come down to us, through the hands of all Ages ſince, ſo as they were delivered to them? What do we ſee now, more than our Forefathers did in *Arnobius* his days, or thoſe which ſucceeded, that gives us any cauſe to ſuſpect their truth? Are they altered from what they were? If any company of men had been ſo bold as to venture at ſuch a change, they would firſt have mended the ſtile no doubt, and placed things in greater order and method, according to the exacteſt rules of art. But that they are untainted and uncorrupted, and, in no material paſſage, vary from what they were in former Ages, appears by what all Chriſtian Writers have tranſcribed out of them into their Books, which agrees with that which we now read. They are the ſame now that ever they were. They contain a relation of thoſe things, which converted, as *Arnobius* ſays, the incredulous world: who did not want wit nor learning no more than we; but ſaw great reaſon to renounce all the fables which had been told of their Gods, and to believe what they read here concerning *Je-*

ſus.

ſus. For it is the teſtimony of God Almighty, they evidently perceived, that is recorded in thoſe Books. Which when we receive, our faith will not be leſs divine than theirs in the firſt Age: becauſe we both receive the *Witneſs of God*, only they ſaw or heard it, and we read the record of what they ſaw and heard. Which makes no conſiderable difference in the nature of the teſtimony. For the teſtimony of any man ſtanding upon allowed record, is as good an evidence, as if he were alive in perſon to give it. No man loſes his cauſe when his Witneſſes die, if they have already given their evidence in any Court of Record. And therefore there is no reaſon that our Lord *Jeſus* ſhould loſe his authority among us, becauſe the Apoſtles his WITNESSES have left the world, and ſo has the WITNESS of the *Spirit* and the *Holy Ghoſt*: ſince that which they teſtified to mankind ſtands upon authentick record, in the holy Goſpel, which cannot with any ſhow of reaſon be queſtioned: For if we do not allow this way of conveying down a teſtimony to future times, we can know nothing of what was done before us. And by denying all credit to theſe writings, we ſhall only teach poſterity how little credit is due

due to any of ours. Nay, we ſhall ſhake all mens titles to their eſtates: and Kings will not be able to keep their Crowns faſt upon their heads. Nothing will be certain, but it may be queſtioned whether all the Records in the Tower, and the publick Acts of former Kings and Parliaments be not mere Forgeries.

Beſides, no body in thoſe days ever went about to diſprove what theſe *Witneſſes of Chriſt* preached and have writ. Neither *Jew* nor *Gentile* undertook to ſhow that theſe things were only deviſed for his credit. There were too great Teſtimonies from Heaven ſtill remaining in the Church for ſeveral Ages, to confute ſuch a ſlander. And therefore all that the Devil himſelf could think of to ſhake mens belief, was to ſet up ſome wonder-workers of his own, to confront *Jeſus*: and as it were to vie miracles with him and his Diſciples. But all were ſo ſoon ſcattered, like miſts before the Sun, that they appeared to be but thin ſhadows in compariſon with the living SPIRIT of God, that was in the Church, which baffled and overcame them all. Inſomuch that *Origen* aſſures the Heathen, and they never went about to confute him, that there were

were not above *thirty* of *Simon Magus* his followers then to be found in the world; though he had made diligent enquiry after them, by travel into all parts. They were all vaniſhed, though he made a great noiſe for a time, whileſt the followers of *Jeſus* multiplied and increaſed, even by their perſecutions. Nor could *Apollonius* afterward gain any Proſelytes, that continued; but his fame ſoon died together with himſelf. Whereas the authority of *Jeſus* bare up it ſelf againſt all the oppoſition of the *Roman* Empire, and not only was ſupported, but advanced, and prevailed more and more: their barbarous cruelties only making it grow the faſter. For herein, as *Lactantius* obſerves, the faith and conſtancy of Chriſtians was bravely diſplayed. Men thought they did not without cauſe abhor the Heatheniſh ſuperſtition, when they ſaw them rather die than do that, which others doing, lived and enjoyed the greateſt worldly proſperity. It made them enquire what that good was, which they defended even unto death: which was dearer than all the pleaſures and glory of this world. The people heard them in the midſt of torments, glory in Chriſt *Jeſus*. And whileſt they enquired who he was, the

truth

truth of the Goſpel was divulged and ſpread abroad among them. Their ſufferings brought many to ſee their Martyrdom; and there they ſaw that which moved their enquiry; and by their enquiry they were ſatisfied, and learnt to believe in *Jeſus* as thoſe *Martyrs* did.

But it is time to put an end to this Chapter, which I ſhall conclude with a few remarks upon ſome places of the holy Books, relating to the teſtimony of the Apoſtles, or thoſe that followed them. The firſt is in the 2 *Cor.* vi. 4, 5, 6, &c. where you read how the Apoſtles *approved themſelves as the miniſters of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in neceſſities, in diſtreſſes, in ſtripes, in impriſonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in faſtings, by pureneſs, by knowledge, by long-ſuffering, by kindneſs, by the Holy Ghoſt, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth,* &c. In which words, if they be well conſidered, you will find every one of theſe three WITNESSES, which S. *John* ſays, gave teſtimony to our Saviour on Earth: ſo that he might be ſaid to *come* in the miniſtry of the Apoſtles, *by Water, and Bloud, and the Spirit.* They expreſſed the Holineſs of his life, *by their pureneſs, by their long-*

long-ſuffering, by their kindneſs, by love unfeigned, by the armour of righteouſneſs on the right hand and on the left; that is, they were every way appointed and armed with integrity againſt all calumnies; there was none that could touch their reputation, and ſay that theſe men had any worldly deſign. And as they witneſſed to him thus in their holy lives, ſo they did in their holy doctrine, *by knowledge, and by the word of truth,* preaching the Goſpel ſincerely, as thoſe that ſtudied not to pleaſe men, but God who trieth the hearts. And they were made conformable alſo to his death, and thereby continued the witneſs of the BLOUD, *in much patience, in afflictions, in neceſſities, in diſtreſſes, in impriſonments,* and all the reſt of the hardſhips here mentioned, which I need not tranſcribe again. And laſtly, He forgets not to remember them of the Witneſs of the SPIRIT which they brought along with them: For he ſays they approved themſelves as miniſters of God, *by the Holy Ghoſt, and by the power of God.* That is, beſide all the other Divine gifts wherewith they appeared, they confirmed their doctrine by many miraculous works, which could not be done but by the power of God. Thus they became

came not only *his witneſſes*, as our Saviour ſaid they ſhould, xxiv. *Luke* 48. but they witneſſed to him after the very ſame manner, that he had taught in his example; by *Water*, by *Bloud*, and by the *Spirit*. And therefore when he exhorts *Timothy* to preach the Goſpel, and to be ſtrong in the grace of *Jeſus* Chriſt, and to commit the charge of preaching alſo to other faithful perſons, He enforces his perſwaſion by this argument; that the things he was to deliver were only ſuch as *he had heard of him among or by* MANY WITNESSES, 2 *Tim.* ii. 2. He learnt them by ſo many good evidences which S. *Paul* had given him, that he need not fear to ſpeak them to any man, much leſs doubt to commend them to other faithful preachers (upon the ſame account that he had received them) that they might be able to inſtruct poſterity.

Such, one would think from what hath been ſaid, were thoſe *TWO WITNESSES* mentioned in xi. *Rev.* 3. men of an Apoſtolical ſpirit, whom *Jeſus* raiſed up, after his prime *Witneſſes* had left the world, to juſtifie ſtill by all manner of arguments that great Truth, which they had preached and ſealed with their Bloud, and God

had ſealed by the teſtimony of the Spirit. The next words indeed ſeem to import that the whole body of Chriſtians, whom they inſtructed, joyned with them in this teſtimony: But ſtill theſe great miniſters of *Jeſus* Chriſt, the guides and leaders of thoſe Chriſtians (whoſoever they were, and in what times ſoever they lived, I meddle not with ſuch difficulties) were his moſt eminent *Witneſſes*. Who preached the Goſpel with ſuch power, that it excited againſt them the fury of unbelievers, who could not endure that ſuch *Witneſſes* ſhould ſpeak for *Jeſus*. For they teſtified to him theſe *three* ways here mentioned (which is all that I alledge this place for, not taking upon me to interpoſe in the controverſies there are about the explanation of this Viſion) by Water, Bloud and the Spirit. Firſt by *Water*, if we underſtand thereby, their holy preaching and living. For it is ſaid, *ver.* 3. that they had power *to propheſie*: which ſignifies that they were endowed with extraordinary gifts (for *Prophets* were next to *Apoſtles* in the Church) to interpret and expound the holy writings; and prove out of *Moſes* and the Prophets (as our Saviour did, xxiv. *Luke* 27.) all things that concerned him, both his ſufferings and his glory. And this

this they did *cloathed in ſackcloth*; that is, in the habit of *mourners*: for the abominations, I ſuppoſe, which they ſaw committed, and the provoking infidelity of thoſe to whom they preached. Which was a notable mark of their great piety and charity, as you may learn from ix. *Ezek.* 4. and v. *Matth.* 4. They are ſaid alſo to be *the two Olive-trees, ver.* 4. that is, like *Zerubbabel* and *Joſhua*, (two famous perſons among the *Jews* after the captivity, who were repreſented by this Emblem, iv. *Zach.* 3.) *King and Prieſts unto God*; men endowed with great authority and illumination from above, and with as great purity. For they had ſo much of the oil of gladneſs, that they imparted it to others: *to the Candleſticks*; that is, the Churches wherein they ſhined. For ſo S. *John* teaches us, in the beginning of this Book, to interpret *Candleſticks*: which is a great argument of the excellency of theſe men, who by the witneſs of their life and doctrine, made all thoſe who were under their care, to teſtifie, ſome way or other, to the ſame truth that they did. At leaſt by their lives; for they are ſaid *to ſtand before the God of the Earth*. Which is an *Hebrew* phraſe, ſignifying to miniſter unto God, to be im-

ployed in his worſhip and ſervice, as the Prieſts and People were at the Temple: and therefore ſets forth the piety and devotion of theſe perſons, whoſe buſineſs it was to ſerve God, even then when it was moſt dangerous ſo to do.

And as by Water, ſo by *Bloud* alſo they bare witneſs of him. For they had *war made againſt them*, and in the fight, ſince they would not yield, they were *killed*, *ver.* 7. Nay, it was notorious to all, that their perſecutors had not only drawn the ſword againſt them, but that they had reſiſted *unto bloud*: for *their dead bodies lay in the ſtreet of the great City*, *ver.* 8. and they would *not ſuffer them to be put in graves*, *ver.* 9. which ſhows the enraged malice which they bare to theſe zealous WITNESSES: who had *tormented them* (*ver.* 10.) by the ſharpneſs of their arguments, and by their conſtant reproofs of their infidelity and wickedneſs.

Nor was the *Witneſs of the* SPIRIT wanting: for they approved themſelves as Miniſters of God, to ſpeak in S. *Paul*'s language, and Witneſſes of Chriſt by wonders and miracles ſo great, that they might be compared to the two great Prophets

phets *Moſes* and *Elias*, who appeared with our Saviour on the holy Mount. For they ſent *fire out of their mouths* (*ver.* 5.) and had *power to ſhut up Heaven that it ſhould not rain*, (*ver.* 6.) both which were the known works of *Elias*. They had *power likewiſe over the Waters, to turn them to bloud, and to ſmite the Earth with all plagues, as often as they pleaſed*, *ver.* 6. which is the plain deſcription of men like to *Moſes*: who brought ſuch plagues on the *Egyptians* as theſe had power to do upon thoſe who were like them; both in hardneſs of heart and in oppreſſion of the faithful ſervants of God. And therefore I ſuppoſe they are deſcribed with a power to hurt and deſtroy, rather than with that healing and ſaving vertue wherewith the *firſt Witneſſes* of Chriſt principally came, to ſignifie that their rebellious enemies ſhould be puniſhed for their rejecting *Jeſus*, and doing *deſpight to the SPIRIT of grace*: which once came to them in a more healthful and ſalutary manner, caſting out Devils, turning Water into Wine, healing all manner of Plagues and Diſeaſes, and that as often as they themſelves pleaſed to deſire. And more than this you read (*ver.* 11.) that after the time appointed by God for it, he reſtored theſe

Prophets to life again: and thereby made their teſtimony ſomething like that of his Son's. That is, men animated with the very ſame ſpirit ſtood up in their place, to the amazement of all their oppoſers. Who were ſo far from being able to hurt them, that they were as ſafe as if they had been *in Heaven.* The preſence of God was with them, as in *the cloud* which preſerved the *Iſraelites* from all danger: And he advanced them to great honour, by the Heavenly gifts wherewith they were adorned. As *Elias* is ſaid to come though he did not appear in perſon, but another in his ſpirit and power; and *David* is ſaid to be raiſed up to reign over the *Jews* (xxx. *Jer.* 9.) becauſe his Son, that is, Chriſt was ſet upon his Throne: ſo did *the Spirit of life from God enter into theſe witneſſes, and they ſtood upon their feet,* when he raiſed up other Apoſtolical perſons in their ſtead, who were not leſs eminent than thoſe who were dead, but full of the ſame ſpirit of wiſdom, holineſs, burning zeal, and might and power alſo from God. This frighted all their enemies, as well it might, when they ſaw the Chriſtian Cauſe would not die, do what they could. But if they killed ſome, others ſtarted up in their room to witneſs

unto

unto *Jeſus*, and aſſert the ſame truth; by wonders, by their admirable preaching, by their holy life, and by death it ſelf; if nothing elſe would ſatisfie them.

For thus all the MARTYRS teſtified to him. Whoſe *BLOUD* witneſſed not only that they believed his Religion, and that they valued the favour of *Jeſus* more than their lives; but that they had very good reaſon ſo to do: or elſe men of ſuch wiſdom would not have endured ſuch torments as they freely expoſed themſelves unto, with ſo much chearfulneſs, as we find they did. For as S. *Hilary* tells us, *Some gloried in the chains which they wore in priſon; others being beaten till they died, did nothing but give thanks; others readily laid down their necks to be cut off: and more ran to thoſe piles, which they ſaw built to burn them; and, with a devout haſte, leapt into thoſe fires, at which the miniſters of their torments trembled; and there were thoſe who were thrown into the Sea, not as if they were to be drown'd, but went to partake of the refreſhment of eternal bliſs.* So he writes upon thoſe words of the *Pſalmiſt*, lxv. 10, 12. *Thou haſt tried us, as ſilver is tried: we went through fire and water*, &c. The fruit of which was, that thereby ma-

ny were converted unto Chriſt. Their death gave life to others, who ſeeing their zeal, their conſtancy, their meekneſs, their patience, and their charity, became Proſelytes to that faith for which they ſuffered. A new race of illuſtrious *Martyrs* roſe up in their ſtead, in whom they yet lived. For *there was no other cauſe* (as that Father adds upon the following Verſe) why they gave themſelves as whole burnt offerings to Chriſt, *but that by the example of their Faith and Martyrdom, they might inſtruct many more to be Martyrs.* Nay, their BLOUD did not only water many young plants, and made them grow to their perfection; but He tells us a little after, in his expoſition of the ſame *Pſalm*, *Plures ſcimus*, &c. *We know many who were wholly ignorant of the Divine Sacraments* (*i.e.* the Chriſtian Religion) *that by the example of the Martyrs run to Martyrdom.* No wonder then, that theſe above all others have been called the WITNESSES of *Jeſus* (for that's the interpretation of the word MARTYR) and that Chriſtians were forward even to kiſs their wounds, and to embrace their dead bodies, as the remains of thoſe who had done moſt eminent ſervice to our Lord. Who himſelf therefore witneſſed to *them*

after

after they were dead, and declared that their *bloud* was very dear and precious in his ſight, and that it had ſealed nothing but the truth. For there can no other reaſon be given but this, why at the Monuments of theſe MARTYRS or WITNESSES our Saviour was pleaſed to have ſo many miracles wrought afterward, and before ſuch a number of people, that *Porphyry* himſelf (as we learn both from S. *Cyril* and S. *Hierom*) though an avowed enemy of our Religion, could not but acknowledge them. They ſtill ſpake and bare *Witneſs* to *Jeſus* by theſe wonderful works, when they were dead; or rather *Jeſus* ſpake for them, as I ſaid, and declared from Heaven that theſe were his *faithful Witneſſes*, whoſe word ought to be believed, whereby they had declared him to be the Lord.

A PRAYER.

WHO would not believe on thee, O Lord? who would not magnifie thy Name? For great and marvellous are thy works,

works, juſt and true are thy ways, thou King *of* Saints. *All* Nations *ought to come and worſhip before thee, whoſe Majeſty and Glory is ſo many ways made manifeſt. Thou haſt raiſed poor and ignorant men to be mighty Miniſters of thy* Grace, *and Witneſſes of thy Reſurrection, and co-workers with thee for the illumination and converſion of the world. Bleſſed be thy name, for all the glorious* Lights *which have been in thy* Church *in every Age; by whom thy holy* Faith *hath been preſerved and propagated to our days. Bleſſed be thy name, for all the* Martyrs *who ſealed it with their* Bloud: *and for all the Confeſſors who freely acknowledged thee, with the danger of their lives. Great was thy glory which ſhone in their moſt exemplary holineſs, fortitude, patience, love unfeigned both to friends and enemies; and in that mighty power whereby they approved themſelves as the Miniſters of* God.

Thanks be to thee, O God, *the* Lord *of* Heaven *and* Earth, *for the comfort of thy holy* Scriptures, *wherein we read the ſtory of our* Saviours *wondrous love; and of that moſt miraculous power which appeared in him, to teſtifie unto him, and at laſt raiſed him from the dead, and advanced him to the throne of* Glory. *From whence he ſent the* Holy Ghoſt,

to

to endue his Apoſtles, Prophets, Evangeliſts, Paſtors and Teachers, with power from on high; that they might be his Witneſſes, and commit that which they had received to faithful men, who ſhould be able to teach others alſo. *O God, I cannot but again adore thy incomprehenſible love, which can never be ſufficiently praiſed. Who can underſtand the exceeding riches of thy grace, that thou whoſe naked glory is too bright for our weak minds to fix their eyes upon, wouldeſt be pleaſed in moſt admirable condeſcending love, to manifeſt thy ſelf and viſit us in our fleſh? Thou art infinitely above the greateſt of us; who are far leſs worthy to approach thee than the loweſt creature in this world is fit for our friendſhip and ſociety. So much the more marvellous is thy unheard of love, that thou wouldeſt admit us to ſuch a near relation unto thee. So much the greater is our happineſs, that in Chriſt* Jeſus *thou haſt made thy ſelf our portion, and deſigned us to be eternally bleſſed with thee. Great was his care and kindneſs all the days of his fleſh, towards the moſt miſerable wretches: who received the greateſt tokens of his love. I rejoyce now to think with what tenderneſs he received the poor, fed the hungry, viſited the ſick, cured the diſeaſed; and when he had left the world, communicated the ſame power*

unto others, that they might exerciſe the ſame charity that he had done. I ſee both the power and goodneſs of our Lord, *in all thoſe works of wonder which he did. I ſee that his mercy endureth for ever, which hath preſerved a faithful record of theſe things, that we* through patience and comfort of the holy Scriptures might have hope.

Now the God of all grace inſpire me and all other Chriſtian Souls, with the ſame faith, love and ardent zeal, which was in thoſe burning and ſhining Lights, *the Witneſſes of Chriſt. That we may be followers of them, as they were of him: and acknowledging the ſame* Lord, *being members of the ſame body, partaking of the ſame Sacraments, and living upon the ſame Heavenly food; we may lead the ſame holy lives, in hope to ſhine one day with them in the ſame celeſtial glory. Help us to* continue in the things which we have learnt, and have been aſſured of, knowing of whom we have learnt them; that we may not at any time let them ſlip. For how ſhall we eſcape if we neglect ſo great ſalvation, which at the firſt began to be ſpoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; thou, O God, alſo bearing them witneſs both with ſigns and wonders, and with divers miracles,

miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, according to thine own will? *May we always carefully lay up and preſerve theſe ſacred truths in our heart, which were in ſo glorious a manner delivered to us! May they work there perpetually with great power, and be reverenced as the holy Oracles of God! May they be the ſpring of all our motions, throughout the whole courſe of our life! That with an even ſteddy pace, whatſoever dangers come in our way, we may walk on towards that happy place, where thoſe holy ones rejoyce for ever with our Lord. To whom with the Father and the Holy Ghoſt, be given by us, and by thoſe glorified Spirits, and by all the Angels in Heaven, everlaſting Praiſes.* Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

The Uſe we are to make of their Teſtimony.

IT is time now to bring this Diſcourſe to an iſſue: and, having examined all theſe Divine *Witneſſes*, taken their proofs and depoſitions, and found their teſtimony, upon due enquiry, to be good and legal, to conſider with our ſelves what we have to do, and what judgment we will paſs now that we have heard their evidence. God the *Father* of all, ſays that *Jeſus* is his Son; the *Word* himſelf appeared oft to juſtifie this Truth; the *Holy Ghoſt* came down from Heaven to atteſt it; the *Prophet of the Higheſt* proclaimed it; the *holy life* of our Saviour ſpake as much; and his *Bloudy Death* ſealed it; to which the *Spirit* ſet its ſeal alſo, and undeniably witneſſed that bloud was ſacred which he ſhed, for a teſtimony, upon the Croſs.

Croſs. All theſe have done their part, all that *Witneſſes* by their office are to do, for the making of this good, that *Jeſus* is the Son of God. That which remains is our task: who are bound to conſider, and ſeriouſly ponder, and impartially judge, and then faithfully improve their ſacred Teſtimony, that *Jeſus* may have the *glory* that is due unto him, and we may have that *benefit*, which God by him deſigns to beſtow upon us.

I.

And firſt of all let us conſider a-while the great weight and importance of this Truth, that *Jeſus is Gods Son*. If the whole frame of Chriſtian Religion did not rely upon it; there would not have been ſuch care taken to ſettle it, and lay it deep in our hearts, by ſo much labour and ſtrength of argument. It is equally blameable to be laborious about a trifle, and to be ſuperficial and ſlight in things of greateſt moment. No man of ſenſe will, with a great deal of diligence, ſummon together a number of Witneſſes, to make good that which, when it is proved, it is indifferent (as to any thing that depends upon it) whether it be true or falſe. No

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queſtion there is a conſiderable intereſt of ours, which is concerned in this truth; elſe the Holy men of God would not have called HEAVEN AND EARTH TO WITNESS and bear their teſtimony to it. The *Father*, the *Word*, the *Holy-Ghoſt* would not have concurred with the *Water*, the *Bloud* and the *Spirit* to aſſert and maintain it; but that all is little enough to juſtifie it, and that it is a thing of which we cannot but deſire the greateſt aſſurance. It is (1.) the *Foundation* of all other Truths in the Chriſtian Religion, as you may read, 1 *Cor.* iii. 11. xvi. *Matth.* 17, 18. It is the *Rock* on which the Church is built; the Ground that ſupports the whole Fabrick: which if it be infirm and rotten, all falls to rubbiſh and confuſion. And therefore (2.) the Devil laboured to undermine this Truth above all others. Like a ſubtile Enemy, when the Apoſtles as *wiſe Maſter-builders* had laid this foundation, he imployed falſe Teachers and counterfeit Apoſtles, as ſo many Pioneers, to work under this, and lay their trains to blow it up: which he knew was a nearer way to ruine all, than to plant his Batteries againſt the building onely. The Hiſtory of the firſt times afford too plentiful inſtances of this. For we find there aroſe *many Anti-chriſts*,

1 *Joh.* ii. 18. and *many falſe Prophets* went out into the World: iv. 1. And the very *ſpirit of Antichriſt*, as he tells us, *verſ.* 3. was this, to deny that *Jeſus, who came in fleſh* (in a mortal condition and ſubject to our miſeries) *was Chriſt.* They would not have it thought that any one who ſuffered ſo vilely, was the great KING that had been ſo long expected. Or if they believed *Jeſus* to be a great Prophet, and that he was raiſed from the dead, and rewarded for his labours in Heaven, as other Prophets were; yet they denied that he was made LORD OF ALL, the Head of the Church and of all Principalities and Powers; who was to be honoured by all Men, even as they honour the Father. And therefore (3.) the Apoſtles imployed as great care and earneſt indeavour for to ſtrengthen and ſupport this weighty truth, as the Enemies of Religion laboured might and main, as we ſay, to weaken and overthrow the belief of it. This was the thing they every where preached, as you read in the Hiſtory of the Acts of the Apoſtles. And for this very end S. *John* wrote this Epiſtle, to confirm his Diſciples in this Faith, againſt all the ſubtile oppoſition of their adverſaries; as you may collect from many paſſages beſide that which I have expounded.

pounded. And it was the thing aimed at alſo in his ſecond Epiſtle, where he rejoyces to hear that they *walkt in the truth*, verſ. 3. and cautions them againſt *thoſe deceivers and Antichriſts*, verſ. 7. And indeed (4.) it was the great note of difference between the true Prophets and the falſe, as you may ſee, 1 *Cor.* xii. 3. and in the place now mentioned in this Epiſtle, iv. 1, 2. which alſo (5.) makes him command his Diſciples, that if any one pretending to the Spirit did not acknowledge this; they ſhould not uſe the common civility to him, of bidding him *God ſpeed*, ii. Epiſt. 10. And if any man apoſtatiz'd from this faith (which is the laſt thing I ſhall mention) S. *Paul* pronounces a moſt dreadful curſe upon him, and wiſhes or predicts the Lord would come and ſpeedily execute it, 1 *Corinth.* xvi. 22. *For whoſoever tranſgreſſeth and abideth not in the Doctrine of* CHRIST, *hath not God*: 2. epiſt. of S. *Joh.* 9.

This being a truth therefore of ſo great moment, as appears by theſe conſiderations, and by the many *Witneſſes* to which S. *John* here appeals for the proof of it; let us be ſure to ſettle a ſenſe of its concernment to us, in our hearts; and then to think often of it, and ſtudy it ſo thoroughly,

that we may perceive both the truth and importance of it: or elſe we ſhall prove our ſelves deſpiſers of God, who do as bad as ſay, that it was a needleſs pains which he beſtowed, in giving ſo many evidences of that, for which we have no regard, or no liſt to bring to trial and examination. And that truly, I doubt, is the temper of moſt Chriſtian People at this day. They think all diſcourſes on this ſubject uſeleſs or little worth; becauſe they prove that which they believe already. Heathens might reap ſome profit by them, but what, ſay they, have we to do with them? But while ſuch thoughts as theſe have too long poſſeſſed the drowſie Chriſtian world, they remain, alas! in the very dregs of Heatheniſm, with a little ſmack or taſte of Chriſtianity. It is a ſad thing to conſider, but ſo it is, that they who cannot endure to think upon what ground their belief ſtands (becauſe they would not put themſelves to the trouble of underſtanding it) are of that baſe temper which is the mother of Idolatry, of Mahometiſm, and of all ſpurious Religions in the World. For what is it makes Men worſhip the Sun, Moon and Stars, or addreſs their ſervices to dead men, nay to a piece of wood, or a red cloth, or ſome ſuch paultry thing? what

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makes *Mahomet* ſo reverenced, by a great part of the World, as the Prophet of the Higheſt; but that they have ever been ſo taught, and it is the cuſtome to honour him? They examine no further, nor enquire for any other reaſon; that is, do not obſerve that there is no other reaſon for their belief. Upon the very ſame account do many receive Jeſus for the Son of God; He hath no better footing in their Souls, nor ſtands upon firmer grounds, than *Mahomet*, or the Sun, or an Idol does, in the opinion of other men. There is no other reaſon, as far as they know, but only the common practice of the place where they live, why they honour him as the great Lord who governs all. Is not this a foul diſhonour to our Saviour, to have no better ſubjects, nor a ſtronger hold, than this, of their hearts? How little is he beholden to thoſe, who can juſtifie his Title, upon no better principles, than others make uſe of in the behalf of the Uſurpers of Divinity? But it reflects the greateſt ſhame in our own faces, that we ſhould have ſuch plentiful and good evidence in our Books, and none at all in our minds. What is that reſpect worth which we pretend to Religion, if a falſe would have been accepted with as much affection as we have for the

true; had it not come too late?

The People would have Chriſt's Miniſters to move their affections; to carry them away with a torrent of words, and earneſt expreſſions. But to what ſhall they carry them? ſtay a while and anſwer that queſtion. If it be not to that which is true, they will do you wrong to hurry them ſo violently and in ſuch haſte, to that from which you ought rather to run away. Now how ſhall you know whether it be to the Truth or no? Muſt it not be proved by good reaſons; muſt they not make it evident and clear that they propound ſomething which ought to be entertained, before they can ſafely move any mans heart to embrace it? But to what purpoſe is all this done, if after all their labour, you will not conſider it? If all this muſt be paſſed by as dry ſtuff, and you will gape only for the application? Conſider, I beſeech you, that if the affections you deſire ſhould be ſtirred, be not grounded on good judgment (which muſt be ſetled on ſome weighty reaſon) they are ſo far from being ſo good as they ought; that they may ſoon prove very hurtful and bad. They diſpoſe a man to be an empty Enthuſiaſt; to be rapt away with any paſſionate, though idle,

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ſtory; and to be ſet on fire by zealous expreſſions for any plauſible though dangerous error. In ſhort, ſuch affections are indifferent to be either good or bad, as it chances. Therefore if you would have our Lord *commend you* for being of his Religion rather than of any other; if you would have the *praiſe* of it; ſtudy well ſuch things as theſe, which from the Holy writings I have propounded to be conſidered in the foregoing Treatiſe: for you ſee the very bottom of his Religion ſtands upon them. So ſhall you be ſatisfied alſo that your affections are truly good, when you are moved with love towards him, becauſe you *are ſure and know* (as S. *Peter* ſpeaks, vi. Joh. 69.) *that he is that* CHRIST, *the Son of the living God.* Do you not think that many have a very tender melting affection for the Bleſſed Virgin *Mary*; and that they are full of devotion to ſeveral other Saints, and feel a great paſſion ſometimes in their Prayers to them, or in their commendation of them? Have a care, leſt your affections to the Lord Jeſus be no better than theſe. How can you think that they are of an higher ſtrain, more than meer natural and imaginative things; if you have no better reaſons to prove that he is to be worſhipped, than they have to

build their reſpect upon to thoſe? If you receive him for the *King of Heaven*, upon the ſame account that ſhe is ſet up for the *Queen* (becauſe it is the common opinion, which you have ſuckt in with your Mothers milk, *&c.*) your love to him is juſt like their love to her: nothing Divine nor Heavenly, but a natural paſſion, which is as ready to ſpend it ſelf upon any other perſon, as on himſelf.

And here it will be fit to add, that we ought to be very cautious what we believe; becauſe there are ſo many cheats in the world. And of thoſe above all others we ought to be well aware, who would have us uſe no caution; but greedily ſwallow, without any chewing, that which they deliver to us upon their word. God you ſee would not have us believe without good reaſons; and reaſons proportionable to the weight of the thing, which we are to believe. His Miniſters appeal to the teſtimony of known *Witneſſes*: and where Witneſſes offer themſelves to us to prove any thing, it is our duty ſure to hear and examine them. And we ought not to ſurrender our belief to any thing careleſly; nor, either out of idleneſs and ſloth, or being over-awed by the confidence which

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any men aſſume to themſelves, content our ſelves with an implicite faith: neglecting to ſearch, and prove, and try all things, which demand to have no leſs than our Souls reſigned up unto them. For that which commands our underſtanding, and hath got authority there, hath a right to govern our Will and command the whole man. And therefore we had need take care what we ſuffer to ſeat it ſelf in that throne; for according as our opinions and judgments are, ſo will our inclinations be, both in our affections and in our lives. It is a great commendation which *Socrates* gives *Cebes*, that he was careful to enquire into all things, and duly weigh them, χ᾽ ὐ πάνυ ἐυθέως ἐθέλει πείθεσθαι, ὅτι ἄν τις εἴποι, and would not preſently believe that which any body ſaid, though otherwiſe he had ſufficient reſpect unto him. That warineſs which was in an Heathen ſure doth as much or more concern us Chriſtians. Who ought to ſuſpect thoſe who would have us believe them, without putting our ſelves to the trouble of much ſearch. It is a ſign they mean to deceive; for if God himſelf doth not expect to be believed, unleſs there be good witneſſes for that to which his Embaſſadors demand aſſent; why ſhould men be ſo

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preſumptuous as to ask us to believe them blindly? Or why ſhould we be ſuch obedient fools, as to do more for them than God would have us do for himſelf? He hath given us eyes, and therefore we ought to look about us, eſpecially when men bid us wink and take any thing upon truſt. He hath endued us with Reaſon, and therefore we ought to ſift and try, and examine that which is propounded to us. And if any body ſay, do not try nor examine; you are not able to diſcern the differences of things; believe as we teach, for we cannot deceive you: mark that man or company of men, as the greateſt Deceivers. Who intend to impoſe ſomething upon you, which will not abide the teſt; and for which they have no good proof, if their pretences be examined. You may be ſure if they were well furniſhed with proofs, they would not fear the trial, but deſire to have all brought to the touch-ſtone, that Truth may be differenced from its counterfeit. No body refuſes to be judged, but he that knows his cauſe is naught, and fears he ſhall be caſt. Such men had need do all they can to lurk in the dark, and put off their ſtuff when no body can ſee what it is; who know it is deceitfully wrought, and will not abide the light.

light. They do wiſely and as cunning Merchants, who make up in words and great aſſurances of their honeſty, what is wanting in the goodneſs of their wares. But why we ſhould have ſo little wit as to take their words, who can tell? We muſt anſwer for this folly, no doubt, to Almighty God; who hath given us more underſtanding if we would uſe it, and taught us by himſelf to call for good witneſſes of that, which is offered to us for a truth. And the more ſtrictly we examine *theſe* which S. *John* here alledges, the better we ſhall be ſatisfied that they intend not to deceive us. Which is a mark we ſhould always have much in our eye, when we are enquiring after Truth. If the more we ſearch, conſider and ponder the proofs which are brought, the better they appear, and the clearer they grow; it is a very good ſign there is nothing wanting to make it fully entertain'd, but only longer thoughts, and greater and more ſerious conſideration. As on the other hand, we have great reaſon to ſuſpect and turn away from that, which the longer we weigh its proofs, the lighter they ſeem: and the propounders of them alſo begin to ſhift and ſhuffle, till they have put all into a miſt, in which we can

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ſee nothing, but that they are at a loſs, and are fain to puzzle us, becauſe they cannot clear that which they were about. Thanks be to God there is nothing of this in the evidences we give, for the true Chriſtian Religion. They are plain and perſpicuous, and ſhow themſelves in a greater brightneſs, the more we look upon them, and the better we are acquainted with them. Search and try what has been ſaid, and the light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt will ſhine with greater luſtre in your eyes, and you will confeſs with S. *Peter*, 2 i. 3. that *he hath called us to the knowledge of him, by glory and vertue*; that is, by a moſt amazing power of God, which declared him to be his only Son, our Lord.

II.

Let us therefore in the next place, conſider ſeriouſly, how excellent and perfectly rational the Faith of Chriſtians is. There is nothing founded upon ſuch Authority, as our moſt holy Religion. It is no childiſh, ſilly thing, to be a believer. A man doth not betray his weakneſs and eaſie credulity, when upon examination and ſearch he ſuffers his Soul to be planted with

with theſe new Principles; but demonſtrates the ſtrength, the nobleneſs and ingenuity of his mind, which can diſcern and judge aright: for nothing can pretend to ſo much reaſon as they. There are a vaſt heap of things, which I could here accumulate, beſide thoſe which I have treated of, to make good this aſſertion. But becauſe the method of the Apoſtle which I have followed, is ſo clear and eaſie, and the Witneſſes ſo full and pregnant, that every one of them affords us many evidences; I will content my ſelf with a brief review of what hath been ſaid. Which will be ſufficient to convince us, that *our Faith is the higheſt improvement of our Reaſon*; and doth not debaſe, but elevate and raiſe our underſtanding, upon the ſureſt grounds of Divine demonſtration. For if you conſider what Teſtimonials they brought along with them, who have pretended to ſpeak in God's name, you will find there is nothing comparable to the Witneſs which God hath given of his Son. No, not in that Religion which was really founded by his Authority; much leſs in that where there was only the *Name* of God pretended, without any *Power*.

I. *Mahomet*, I mean (to begin firſt with the latter of theſe) took upon him to be the Apoſtle and the Prophet of God; greater not only than *Moſes*, but than *Jeſus* himſelf. And ſuch was his confident brags of Revelations from God, that among a company of wild *Arabians*, whom *Algazel* acknowledges to have approached the neareſt to Beaſts, of all other men, He made ſome proſelytes to his belief. But what proof did he give, that he was divinely ſent? Was it ever heard that God ſpake to him ſo much as once, as he did often to our Saviour? At what time, or in what place, and in whoſe audience did God ſay to him, *Thou art my Prophet?* When did a voice from Heaven come to any three, or but one man, and ſay, *This is the Apoſtle of God, hear him?* It is a marvellous Providence of God, that this Impoſtor, who wanted no confidence, ſhould never adventure in all the relations he hath made of himſelf (quite contrary to our Lord who wrote nothing of his own life, but left all to his Diſciples) to tell any ſuch ſtory as this, for his greater credit and glory among his followers. We read indeed of ſome idle tales which he reports, of an Angel ſpeaking to him; and

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of his aſcenſion into Heaven, I know not how many millions of miles: But what witneſs was there of theſe things? what was his name, who ſaw the Angel appear to him? or who ſtood by, when he was tranſported and carried out of ſight, as he dreamed? Or when and to whom did *Moſes* or any one elſe appear, and verifie it, that he had been with them in glory? If we muſt take his own word, which is all we can hear of to vouch it, then we muſt not refuſe to believe every fooliſh fellow, who has impudence enough to pretend to propheſie. But what then will become of the faith of *Mahomet* himſelf, if the ſword were out of his hand? Let us hear ſuch a man as *John* the Baptiſt (whoſe piety and vertue is atteſted by thoſe who were no Friends of our Religion) affirm that he heard and ſaw ſuch things as he reports; and we will be content to abate them the Apoſtles, and ſuch a multitude of people, as heard God ſay he would *Glorifie his Name*, in our Saviour. And in what Glory hath that falſe Prophet appeared ſince he left the World? Whoſe eyes hath he ſtruck out, with the brightneſs of his countenance? Nay, by whom hath he been ſo much as ſeen ſince he was buried? I need not put the queſtion about his Reſurrection,

ſurrection, for they never pretended it. Only the ſottiſh people would not believe when he died, that he was really dead, but ſaid he was taken up to Heaven, as *Jeſus* was. And *Omar*, one of his ſucceſſors, threatned death to them that ſhould ſay he was dead; for he was only gone away as *Moſes* did into the Mount, and would return again. From whence perhaps aroſe that vulgar error among us, that the *Mahumedans* expect the return of their Prophet *. But *Abu Becri* proved to them out of the *Alcoran*, that He was to die as other Prophets before him, and ſo appeaſed *Omar* and the multitude.

* See *Pocock. in Gregor. Abul Phar. p.* 180. 264.

And was it ever heard that the Holy Ghoſt fell down upon him, in a viſible ſhape while he lived? There is not one of his own followers (as the learned Mr. *Pocock* aſſures us) who makes any mention, ſo much as of the Pigeon, which, as we commonly tell the tale, was wont to flie to his ear, as if it whiſpered ſome revelation to him. There was not that ſmall imitation, of what is recorded of our Saviour. Much leſs was there any ſuch glorious body ſeen deſcending on him, as that which came down like a Dove, and crowned our Saviours head. The Hea-

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vens never opened to him; nor was he transfigured in the preſence of any of his diſciples. Where are the Books that can tell us of any ſuch thing? or ſo much as of any miracles, which he wrought to confirm his Doctrine? He himſelf ſays in his *Alcoran* more than once, that *he was not ſent with Miracles, but with Arms.* And though his followers afterward pretended that he did work miracles, yet they never pretend they were done frequently; and moſt of them are very ridiculous and uſeleſs; and their learned men do not at all rely upon them, nor think he proved his Prophecy by this means. There is no news of any blind-mans eyes that he opened, or of his making the lame to walk, or cleanſing a poor Leper; much leſs of a dead-mans hearing his voice, and ariſing out of his grave, and of ſuch like things done by his followers: which we are ſure, from eye-witneſſes, our Lord did, and gave thoſe that teſtifie it power to do the ſame wonders. And if we go to enquire of the Witneſs of *Water*, in Holineſs of Doctrine and Life; what a ſink of dirty ſtuff is his *Alcoran?* The pleaſures of the fleſh are the higheſt that he had in his thoughts to propound to his followers. His Heaven is no better than a ſenſual Pa-

radiſe. But as for the joys of the Holy Ghoſt, or a taſte of any ſpiritual delights, he ſeems to have had no more ſenſe of them than a Swine. How ſhould he, being an impure laſcivious beaſt himſelf; who had ſeventeen Wives, beſides Concubines? And not content with theſe, took another mans Wife (the wife of his ſervant *Zaid*) and pretended a revelation for it. Which, he had the impudence to ſay, told him that God was not only well pleaſed he ſhould have her, but took it ill he had abſtained ſo long from her, out of fear what the world would ſay. Whereas he ought to have feared God, rather than men. What could be expected from ſuch a Brute, but ſuch a Book as he has left; a mere heap or dunghill rather of filthy nonſence? And if we enquire further for the Witneſs of BLOUD, we can find none but the *Bloud* of other men, which bears witneſs that he was a falſe Prophet. For his buſineſs was to ſhed the bloud of his oppoſers, rather than to give his own, as a teſtimony to the truth. The ſword was his principal weapon, to ſubdue men to his belief. He did not perſwade them by arguments, but compelled them to yield by force of arms. *Go*, ſays he, in the xix. Section of the *Alcoran*, and *kill all thoſe who will*

will not be converted. He was a Murderer as well as a Lyar (like the firſt Deceiver of all) ſo that to ſave their Bodies rather than their Souls, his neighbours found it the beſt way to ſubmit themſelves to his yoke. Did our bleſſed Saviour uſe any ſuch violence? Did he come with a ſword in his hand and ſay, Yield your underſtandings, or your throats? No, *he came not to deſtroy mens lives, but to ſave them.* He would not let his Apoſtles call for fire from Heaven to conſume any body, though it had been as eaſie for him to do, as to ſend the Holy Ghoſt in fiery tongues upon them. He never did any miracle to the hurt of the ſmalleſt living creature; though it would have been recompenſed by a multitude of noble cures, that he wrought for their owners. It did not pleaſe him, that one of his ſervants cut off but the ear of *Malchus*, though it was in *his* defence. He was the *good ſhepherd*, who would not kill the ſheep, but laid down his life for them. This we commemorate perpetually, to his eternal praiſe: whereas the falſe Prophet hath left no other memory, but that he was more like a Wolf than a Shepherd; for he came for nothing but to worry and deſtroy.

But he doth not deſerve ſo much regard, as to be thus ſeriouſly confuted; were not all this ſaid, rather to make us ſenſible of the excellence of our own Religion, than to diſprove that which was taught by him. Whoſe greateſt wiſdome was, that he choſe to begin to make his Proſelytes and plant his Religion, among a company of rude People; who were more like Beaſts, I told you, than Men. If they had been Men of any underſtanding, one cannot imagine how they ſhould have given credit to ſuch ill contrived tales, as thoſe which he invented. But we are told by his own followers that the People of *Mecca* (a place famous for his Tomb at this day) could neither write nor read, but were perfectly ignorant. Nay, *Mahomet* himſelf was wont to ſay, that *he was ſent by God to an illiterate Nation.* Which they expound of the *Arabians* about *Mecca*; who were not *People of the Book*, as they call the Jews and Chriſtians, but as ignorant as they came out of their Mothers Womb (ſays one of their own Authors) having never learnt the art of writing, or of caſting account. Which ſhows how vaſtly different the beginnings of that Religion were, from thoſe of ours; which was preached to the wiſeſt and politeſt People upon Earth, as

that

that was to the moſt rude and ſtupid. The *Greeks* and *Romans* ſoon ſaw their Countries filled with this new Doctrine. Nor was it in the power of their Philoſophers or Orators to ſtop its progreſs. But there were no ſuch Creatures among thoſe wild *Arabians*, and thoſe Philoſophers who aroſe afterwards of this Sect, were aſhamed, it may be made appear by good proofs, of the Alcoran. So deſtitute they are of any thing whereby to ſupport the Religion of that Book, that they are fain to fly to the Goſpel of Chriſt, from thence to gain ſome authority to it. There, ſays the *Saracen*, in *Theodorus Abucara*; Chriſt wrote theſe words, Απος έλλω ὑμῖν προφήτην Μωάμεθ λεγόμενον, *I ſend you a Prophet called Mahomet*; but Chriſtians have blotted it out of their Books. For He they fancy is the *Paraclet* whom our Saviour promiſes; and it is one of the Names they beſtow upon this Impoſtor in their writings: who pretends our Saviour foretold his coming, as many have obſerved out of the lxi. Chapter of the *Alcoran**. Which ſhows how hard they are put to their ſhifts, when they fly to us for refuge; and when Ignorance is the greateſt ſecurity and ſupport to their Religion at this day. It is very remarkable that as our Religion was propagated a-

* *Hacksp. Dialog. de Paſſione Domin.*

mong the wiſeſt and moſt learned Nations, by the moſt illiterate men, meerly by the power of the Spirit and the Holy Ghoſt; ſo being thus propagated, all the learned part of the World is of our Religion. They that are of any other, are ignorant of good learning, as their great enemy. But this fears not to be tried, becauſe it is ſure that knowledge is its Friend, and that wiſdome, as our Saviour ſaid, will be juſtified of her Children. Who clearly ſee even from their own Writings that *Mahomet*, at the beſt, was but an hot Enthuſiaſt, who took his own warm thoughts for inſpiration. But he had no aſſurance of what he ſaid: As the humour wrought he was for new illuminations. It was not his fault that his Diſciples had not another Book, which ſhould have put down the *Alcoran*. For as our famous Profeſſor of this Learning * has obſerved out of *Alſhareſtanius*, when he lay ſick of the Fever of which he dyed, he called for Pen and Ink, that he might write them an infallible Book (it ſeems as yet he had not done it) to keep them from erring when he was dead. This *Omar* lookt upon as a frenzy, (though *Mahomet* took it for an inſpiration) and ſaid, *Alas! the ſickneſs of the Apoſtle of God is very ſtrong*: It is ſufficient that we have the Book of God

* *Mr. Pocock, Ib. p.* 178.

(*i.e.*

(i. e. the *Alcoran)* there needs no more. But ſome were of another mind: and while the Company that ſtood by contended and ſtrove among themſelves, ſome calling for the Pen and Ink, and others agreeing with *Omar*, that he was beſide himſelf, *Mahomet* cryed out, *Get ye gone, it doth not become you to diſpute before me*: and ſo there was an end. But ſome bewail this as a great misfortune, that he did not write them ſuch a Book, as he then had in his Head: that is, more frenzies and ravings of his brain-ſick imagination.—— But it is time to have done with this: which I have ſaid not meerly to ſhow how ſenceleſs that Religion is, which hath over-ſpread ſo great a part of the World; but how happy we are who are taught by our Lord and Maſter Chriſt Jeſus. Whoſe faith relies upon ſuch certain, evident and divine grounds, that if we did but live according to it; we need not fear but by its power and force it would overcome and vanquiſh the other, though ſupported by never ſo numerous followers. The Lord of his infinite mercy quicken our Faith, that we may out-live them; for it is plain we can ſo far out-reaſon them; that there is no more compariſon between our grounds and theirs, than there is between the wiſeſt man that ever

was, and thoſe blocks of *Mecca* that could neither write nor read.

II. The only Religion that can come into any competition with ours, is that of *Moſes*; who indeed was ſent of God, and as became a faithful ſervant of his, in the Houſe or Family committed to his charge, followed his orders and honeſtly teſtified and reported thoſe things which God commanded him to ſpeak, iii. *Hebr.* 5. But if you ſeriouſly weigh what hath been ſaid, you will find the *Jews* had not ſuch weighty Arguments to perſwade them to believe on *Moſes*, as we have to believe in *Jeſus*; who hath abrogated a great part of that Religion.

And *firſt* for the Witneſs of the FATHER, the *Jews* ſay, ix. Joh. 29. *We know that God ſpake to Moſes.* But how did they know it? What evidence were they able to give themſelves of it? If it had pleaſed them to lay aſide their paſſion, and look beyond the prejudices of their education, the proof of it would have appeared ſo ſlender in compariſon with the aſſurances they might have had of his *ſpeaking to Jeſus*; that they would never have added thoſe ſcornful words, which

there

there follow; *as for this fellow we know not whence he is.* God appeared indeed to *Moſes* in the Buſh; and ſaid to him, iii. *Exod.* 6. *I am the God of Abraham, the God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob.* And bids him ſay to the Children of *Iſrael,* to whom he ordered him to go, *I am hath ſent me to you,* verſ. 14. But which of the *Iſrealites* ſtood by, when God ſpake theſe words to him? What perſon was there like *John* Baptiſt, to be a Witneſs of this Voice, which was his Commiſſion? What Creature was there with him (but the Flock he was feeding) that could come afterward and ſay, I was preſent and heard God call to him out of the Buſh? Doth the Voice ſay any where, *I am hath ſent HIM*; as if it ſpake to others beſides himſelf? or what words did he himſelf hear, comparable to thoſe which God ſpake to our Saviour, ſaying, *Thou art my Son,* my well-beloved *Son?* Nor was the manner alike wherein theſe two Voices were delivered. One out of the *Buſh,* the other from *Heaven.* And the Glory wherewith this came to *Moſes,* was much inferiour to the glorious appearance of the Holy Ghoſt deſcending upon Jeſus. An *Angel of the Lord* you read appeared then to *Moſes in a flame of fire,* verſ. 2. But the flame was *in the midſt*

midſt of the Buſh, not upon *Moſes*. Whereas the *Holy Ghoſt*, not an Angel of the Lord, came down at our Saviour's Baptiſm, when he *was ſent*; and not into ſome diſtant place, but *lighted upon HIM*, and there remained. God therefore is ſaid *to DWELL in the Buſh*, xxxiii. Deut. 16. but never to *dwell* in *Moſes*; and the dwelling of God there, was only by the Preſence and Miniſtry of an Angel. Whereas now Jeſus himſelf is the *dwelling place of God*, as I have proved; and it is *God himſelf*, that dwells in him. The Divine Majeſty came upon him, and there it ſetled its abode in his Perſon. Who is *God manifeſted in the fleſh*; and whoſe Glory we behold, the Glory as of the only begotten of the Father; which cannot be ſaid of any other man.

All this is ſo plain, that *Moſes* himſelf ſaw this appearance of God to him (though ſufficient to perſwade him that he was *ſent of God*, becauſe he heard him ſpeak to him out of the Buſh) would not prove a demonſtration to others; who did not hear or ſee any thing to make them believe him, nor had any credible witneſſes to juſtifie this beſide himſelf. He ſays as much afterward to him that ſent him, *Behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken to my voice*;

voice; for they will ſay, the Lord hath not appeared unto thee. iv. *Exod.* 1. And how could he confute them, when they made this exception? unleſs he had ſome ſenſible demonſtration to give them that God was with him; which God immediately furniſhes him withall *(ver.* 2.) though nothing like to the Power of our Saviour, as you ſhall hear preſently. All the miracles he wrought were as ſhort of our Lords, as His firſt Commiſſion was; which you ſee plainly was nothing ſo noble, nothing ſo clear, as that of our bleſſed Saviour's. *Moſes* himſelf is ſenſible of it, and confeſſes he wanted ſome *Witneſs* that God ſpake to him; and that he knew not what to ſay, when the *Iſraelites* bade him prove it. But our Lord needed not to call for any Witneſs; *John* the Baptiſt a great Prophet, as they themſelves allowed, was ready of himſelf (for it was his office) to declare openly that *he ſaw the Spirit deſcending from Heaven, like a Dove, and abiding on him. He ſaw, and bare record that this is the Son of God:* as the Voice from Heaven, in his audience alſo, pronounced him. Which a great many People, if need were, could afterward certifie; who concluded *that an Angel ſpake to him*, as you have heard from S. *John*'s teſtimony. xii. 29.

2. Now

2. Now if you proceed further and ask for ſome Witneſs of *Moſes* his authority, like to that of the WORD (the ſecond Witneſs to our Saviour) who can hear any thing of it? Do we ever read a word of *Moſes* his appearing in ſuch a Glory, as our Lord Jeſus did to his firſt Martyr S. *Steven*, and to S. *Paul* and to his beloved Diſciple? Nay, where are the Witneſſes that ſay he was ſo much as transfigured when he was upon the Mount; or doth he himſelf ever affirm it? When was his Rayment made as white as Snow? or where (as I ſhall examine more hereafter) was the *bright cloud* covering the Mount, which was all cloathed with darkneſs? we read indeed that when he came down *his face ſhone*, but not in ſo bright and glorious a manner as our Saviour's did when he went up into the Holy Mount, and eſpecially after he aſcended into Heaven. Then S. *Steven*, as I have ſaid, *ſaw the Glory of God, and Jeſus ſtanding at his right hand*; an honour never given to any Angel in Heaven. And the Apoſtle of the *Gentiles* ſaw him again, in a light *greater than that of the Sun at Noonday*. And to S. *John* he appeared as the KING OF KINGS AND THE LORD OF LORDS, in ſuch a Majeſty as he was not

not able to bear, but made him *fall at his feet as dead.* He that weighs ſuch things as theſe will ſee, that all the glory of *Moſes* (to uſe S. *Paul*'s words, 2 *Cor.* iii. 10.) *was no glory in this reſpect, by reaſon of the glory that excelleth.*

3. Then if you look for the Teſtimony of the HOLY-GHOST, I have already noted that it never came down upon him, as it did upon the Founder of our Religion. Much leſs did he ſend it upon ſome ſelect Men after he was dead, who ſhould do as great wonders as himſelf. And ſtill much leſs did he beſtow it upon all the People, as our Lord did for a while, upon all Believers. There is not the ſmalleſt foot-ſtep of any ſuch Honour or Power that he had. For He did not communicate a portion of his Spirit to the LXX. Elders, who were choſen to be his Aſſiſtants; but *the Lord ſaid to him, I will come down, and take of the Spirit which is upon thee, and put it upon them,* xi. Num. 17. which words do not ſignifie, it is true, that he had leſs, but only that they had more of the Spirit, than before: yet He did not ſo much as lay his hands upon them that they might receive it, but *God took of the ſpirit which was on him, and gave it to the* LXX. *Elders*;

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even to thoſe two who were not there preſent at the Tabernacle, but remained ſtill in the camp, *ver.* 25, 26.

4. If you go therefore next to the Teſtimony of WATER, how tranſparent is the Purity of our Saviours Doctrine, above that of *Moſes*. Whoſe Laws though they contained nothing diſhoneſt, yet burdened the people, to prevent a greater miſchief of their running into Idolatry, with a number of precepts which in themſelves had no goodneſs at all to commend them. Nay, the Letter of the very moral Law laid reſtraints only upon the outward man, ſo that they who were ſubject to it little regarded the purifying of their ſpirits, from thoſe irregular paſſions and naughty affections, which our Lord expreſly prohibits. There were many things alſo indulged in thoſe days, which our Lord doth not allow. Whoſe deſign was, not only to purge the heart, and make the ſpirit of men much better by all his precepts; but to advance them to the nobleſt degree of purity and goodneſs. Where do you read in the Books of *Moſes*, ſuch precepts of meekneſs, of mortifying fleſhly luſts, of kindneſs to all, and tender compaſſion, of truſt in God, of contentedneſs with the preſent,

preſent, and hope of his mercy in another world, as are frequent and obvious in the Goſpel of Chriſt? Nay, in what place of the Law do you find ſo much as one command or exhortation to Pray, much leſs to Pray without ceaſing, and to Pray (not for riches, and victory over enemies, and long life, but) for the Divine Grace and favour, for the Holy Spirit, for remiſſion of ſins, and for Eternal Life? And now I mention that word, I cannot but deſire you to conſider how low and poor the Promiſes of *Moſes* were, compared with thoſe of our Saviour, who *hath brought in a better Hope*. Of which they could ſee ſo little (ſo dim was the light) in the Law of *Moſes*, that a whole Sect of men who believed in him and received his Law, caſt away all hope of obtaining good things in another life, and denied the Reſurrection of the Dead. And we muſt add to all this, that *Moſes* was but the Light of that one Nation; whereas our Lord ſays, more than once, *I am the Light of the* WORLD, viii. *John* 12. ix. 5. *Moſes* waſhed the *Bodies* of the *Jews*; but now the *hearts* of the unclean *Gentiles are purified by Faith*, xv. *Acts* 9. And if you enquire further into the purity of *Moſes* his life, you will find it was not without

out flaws and blemiſhes: for *he ſpake unadviſedly with his lips*, and could not bring the people to their reſt. But our Lord was perfectly free from all ſpot, the Lamb of God without blemiſh: who never ſpake the leaſt word amiſs, no not in the midſt of ſuch torments as *Moſes* never endured.

5. For if you paſs on to conſider what ſufferings and BLOUD teſtifie; Alas! what is the Bloud of Bulls and of Goats, to the precious Bloud of *Jeſus?* Did *Moſes* ſeal that Covenant of which he was the Miniſter, or did he ſprinkle the Book of the Covenant, with his own bloud? Did he *purge* away *the ſins* of the people *by himſelf*, as our Saviour, we read, did? i. *Hebr.* 3. or ſanctifie them *by the offering of his own body* once for all, as it is, x. *Hebr.* 10? Did he die to bear Witneſs to the Truth? or witneſs ſuch a good confeſſion before *Pharaoh*, as *Jeſus* before *Pontius Pilate?* Was it ever heard, that by the enduring of a ſhameful and cruel death, he declared to all, the certainty of his Prophecy? Upon what Altar was he offered? And for what cauſe did he become a ſacrifice? This was peculiar to *Jeſus*, to ſuffer ſuch things as no man ever did; and for this

this very cauſe, becauſe he ſaid He was the Son of God.

6. *Moſes* then had need to do ſome miracles to confirm his prophecy, ſince he fell ſhort in many other things of giving ſatisfaction. Such as we have, I mean, who abound in Witneſſes to our belief; and hear even this Witneſs, on which the *Jews* heretofore relied, ſpeak more plainly and powerfully to us than it did to them. The SPIRIT of the Lord was upon *Moſes*, the people ſaw by the wonders he did, which moved them to follow him. Though now they are ſo fooliſhly mad againſt our Saviour, that to rob us of this Argument, the *Jews* ſay *Moſes* his miracles did not prove him to be ſent of God, yet it is manifeſt by their ſtory, they were, in a manner, his only glory: I am ſure the principal, or that which firſt induced their forefathers to give any credit to him. For when he asked of God a ſign to give the people (who otherwiſe he foreſaw would queſtion the apparition of the Angel to him) that they might believe as much as himſelf, and acknowledge that God ſent him, He granted him a power of doing ſuch wonders as fleſh and bloud could not do, which, it ſeems, he

thought the propereſt means to convince them. *What is that in thy hand, ſaith the Lord* (immediately after the words mentioned before, iv. *Exod.* 1.) *and he ſaid, a rod. And the Lord ſaid, Caſt it on the ground. And he caſt it on the ground, and it became a Serpent, and* Moſes *fled from before it. And the Lord ſaid unto him again, Put forth thine hand and take it by the tail, and he put forth his hand and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand; that they may believe the Lord God of their Fathers hath appeared unto thee, ver.* 2, 3, 4, 5. This was the end for which this miracle was to be wrought. To which he adds another, that if they would *not believe him, nor hearken to the voice of the firſt*, they might be convinced by the ſecond; or if they would believe neither, he gave him power to do a third, and bade him turn the water of the river into bloud, *ver.* 7, 8. And accordingly you read, he went *and did the ſigns in the ſight of the people, and the people believed: and when they heard God had viſited them, bowed their heads and worſhipped, ver.* 30, 31. After this indeed they disbelieved again, till God drowned their enemies in the red Sea, and *then the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his ſervant Moſes*, xiv. *Exod.* 31. But were any

of

of theſe works ſo wonderful, and ſo powerful to move belief, as thoſe which our Saviour did? It may deſerve a diſcourſe (on a fitting occaſion) on purpoſe to ſhow how much *Moſes* came behind him in this, as well as in all the reſt. Both the number and greatneſs of our Saviour's works were as far beyond his, as the ſtrength of a Gyant is beyond that of an Infant. He was cut off in the midſt of his days, and yet in that three years and an half wherein he lived, after the SPIRIT of God came upon him at his Baptiſm, he did more wonders than *Moſes* did in forty years; nay, more than had been done from the beginning of the world to that time. And if you regard the quality of them, *Moſes* his taking the Serpent by the tail, and turning it into a rod again, was not comparable to our Saviour's caſting out Devils, treading upon the old Serpent, breaking in pieces all his power, by healing all manner of ſickneſs and diſeaſe; and giving his Diſciples alſo the ſame authority and power which was viſible in himſelf. Nor was *Moſes* his hand becoming leprous when he put it into his boſom, and its being reſtored again by the ſame means, any thing like to the miracles of *Jeſus* in curing ſo many old Lepers of all

ſorts, both *Jews* and *Samaritans*, whereſoever they came to him to implore his charity. *Moſes* brought a ſtrong Eaſt wind, which cauſed the Sea to go back, and leave the bottom dry for the *Iſraelites* to march through; but this was nothing ſo wonderful as our Lord's walking upon the Sea, as it had been dry land, and commanding *Peter* to accompany him in the midſt of a boiſterous wind; and his laying his commands upon ſuch tempeſts and raging waves, and the fiſhes alſo, which all obeyed him. Nay, that great miracle of feeding them with Manna, was not ſo ſtrange as our Lord's ſatisfying great multitudes, with five or ſeven loaves and two ſmall fiſhes: which were not proportionable to ſo many thouſand ſtomachs as were filled by them; as the quantity of Manna was to the Armies of the *Iſraelites*. Beſides that you never read a word of *Moſes* his opening the eyes of the blind, much leſs of his raiſing the dead, which our Lord did ſundry times. I need ſay no more to ſhow how inferiour he was to *Jeſus* even in regard of his miracles; concerning which the multitude ſaid truly, *It never was ſo ſeen in Iſrael*, ix. *Matth.* 33. And yet this was the only thing that convinced that Nation at the firſt, and made

them

them believe in *Moſes* (as I have prov'd) before they heard God ſpeak to them, by an Angel, from mount *Sinai*, at the giving of the Law. That was the moſt amazing thing of all; but was after they came out of *Egypt*, and a great while after they had believed *Moſes* was ſent of God, as they ſaw then more fully: and was nothing comparable neither to *Jeſus*'s ſpeaking himſelf to ſome of the Apoſtles out of Heaven, and ſending the Holy Ghoſt from thence, with the gift of tongues and divers others, upon them all. And after all that hath been ſaid of the miracles which the SPIRIT wrought by him, where are the miracles that it wrought for him? Did *Moſes* prove himſelf a true Prophet by riſing again, after he was dead and buried? To whom did he appear? With whom did he eat and drink? Or who can ſay that he aſcended up into Heaven? To whom did he appear in glory, except it was to our Saviour (and ſome of his Diſciples) in honour of whom, it ſeems he had then the favour, and not before, to ſhine in that luſtre wherein they beheld him. In ſhort, God gave not *the Spirit by meaſure* unto *Jeſus*, as you have heard before: He had not ſuch a limited portion of it as *Moſes* had, who appears by theſe

things to have been only a *ſervant* over the *houſe of God*, in which our Saviour had a power as a *Son*, and that over his *own houſe*, iii. *Hebr.* 5, 6.

Thus much hath been ſaid to ſhow the great honour God hath done us in making us Chriſtians. Whoſe Faith, you ſee, ſtands upon ſuch well-laid grounds, that even they who were taught by God had none comparable to them. Herein we have a felicity above all other men that have ever been, if we be but ſenſible of it; that we are not required to receive any thing from God, but upon ſuch reaſons, as far excel thoſe which demanded belief of men in former times, but had not ſuch ſtrength to enforce it. Bleſſed be God, ſhould we all ſay,

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A Prayer.

BLeſſed *be God, who hath not done ſo for any people. He hath ſhown us* HIMSELF, *his* WORD, *and the* HOLY GHOST. Iſrael *hath not ſeen his Glory,*

ſo

ſo as it ſhines in our eyes. And as for his Power and Might, they have not known them, no more than the Promiſes and the Laws, whereby he now governs us. He hath given us a better Covenant, *founded upon a* better Bloud, *which hath brought in alſo a better* Hope, *and is confirmed by a more* powerful Spirit. *Bleſſed be his Goodneſs, that our eyes read, and our ears hear thoſe things, which many Prophets and righteous men deſired to ſee and hear, but could not ſee nor hear them. For* it was revealed, that not unto themſelves, but unto us they did miniſter the things, which are now reported unto us by them that have preached the Goſpel unto us, which the Holy Ghoſt ſent down from Heaven, which things the Angels deſire to look into.

O Bleſs the Lord with us, ye Angels of his that excel in ſtrength; praiſe him and magnifie him for ever. O all ye Powers of the Lord; bleſs ye the Lord, praiſe him and magnifie him for ever. O ye Spirits and Souls of the righteous, bleſs ye the Lord, praiſe him and magnifie him for ever. Praiſe him all ye Apoſtles and Prophets; praiſe him all ye Martyrs and Confeſſors; praiſe him all ye glorious Lights, who have made the Goſpel of Chriſt to ſhine throughout the world. Praiſe

the Father Almighty; praiſe his Eternal WORD; *praiſe the Holy Ghoſt; who have made our Faith to ſtand, not in the wiſdom of men, but in the mighty Power of God. Praiſe him for the Incarnation, the Life, the Death, the Reſurrection, the Aſcenſion, and the Glorification of the Lord* Jeſus: *who hath given us* ſtrong Conſolation, *by that ſure and ſtedfaſt hope, which, throughout all theſe means, he hath ſetled in our hearts.*

O *praiſe him for his marvellous love to us; whom he hath called after a* glorious manner, *and by* an amazing vertue, *to the knowledge of Chriſt; by whom* his Divine power hath given us all things that pertain unto life and godlineſs. *And make us who are ſo nearly concerned in this love, to be very ſenſible how great it is: which hath not only* called us to his Heavenly Kingdom, *but made us ſure and certain by ſo many Witneſſes, that* Jeſus *is the Lord of all, the King of infinite Majeſty, Power and Glory. Let our Souls never ceaſe to* ſhow forth *and publiſh* the vertues *and powerful operations* of him who hath called us into his marvellous light. *Let our mouths be filled with his praiſe all the day long, who out of the riches of his mercy hath made us who were not his people, to be* a choſen generation, an holy nation,

nation, a peculiar people *to himſelf.*

O that our Faith may grow exceedingly, *and be deeply rooted and grounded in our hearts. And as it ſtands upon the ſureſt foundations, ſo we may be built up in it with the moſt aſſured confidence, and ſtand unſhaken and immoveable in it unto the end. And as thou haſt differenced us from all other people, in the clearneſs of that* Light, *which lets us ſee that ours is the* moſt holy Faith: *ſo help us by thy grace to diſtinguiſh our ſelves from all others, by* holding the myſtery of Faith in a pure Conſcience, *and by the upright actions of an unblameable life.*

O that the light of Chriſtians may ſo ſhine before men, that others ſeeing their good works may glorifie thee our Heavenly Father. O that it may diſperſe the darkneſs, which over-ſpreads ſo great a part of the world. That all impoſtures may be diſcovered; and they that live in error may be brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jeſus. *O that his Dominion may reach from Sea to Sea, even unto the worlds end. Let them who dwell in the moſt deſert places kneel before him, and his enemies lick the duſt. Let all Kings of the Earth adore him, and all Nations do him ſervice. Kindle in the hearts of Princes and Nobles an holy ambition to advance*

vance his Glory. Inſpire the hearts of all Biſhops and Prieſts with an ardent zeal for the converſion of Souls. And diſpoſe the hearts of thoſe who are in error, that they may be apt and ready to receive thy ſacred truth. Plant thy Goſpel, where it hath not yet been, and replant it where it hath been rooted out: And give us grace who have long been thine own vineyard, to bring forth plenty of good fruit. That our lives may be as holy as our faith; and we may convince Jews, Turks, *and all other Infidels, that thou art among us, and that* Jeſus *whom we worſhip is the* Lord. *To him with the* Father *and the* Holy Ghoſt, *be Glory and Praiſe among all mankind, and throughout all Ages, world without end.*

Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Other neceſſary Uſes we are to make of their Teſtimony.

THere is no great skill required, to ſee the difference between that Holy Religion which we profeſs; and all others that are entertained in the reſt of the World. Some we muſt have; and it is as palpable that this is incomparably the moſt excellent, as it is that there is any Religion at all. There is no Nation ſo barbarous, but pays ſome reſpect and ceremony (to uſe the phraſe of *Tully* when he defines Religion) to ſome Superiour and more excellent Nature, which we call Divine. *Though they are ignorant what kind of God it becomes them to have, yet they know a God muſt be had, and muſt be worſhipped.* Their own mind teaches them this, as ſoon as they caſt their eyes upon the admirable frame of the World; which

all

all naturally conclude muſt have had ſome moſt wiſe and mighty Builder. But what reſpect and reverence that is, which will be pleaſing to him, they are very uncertain; it is manifeſt, by the various ways they have invented to expreſs their Devotion. They all with one conſent acknowledge a neceſſity of a Revelation to inſtruct them; for there is no Nation but pretends to have received ſome things, by the inſtinct, inſpiration, or apparition of their Gods. That which pure natural reaſon dictates, is not to be found ſimple and unmixt in any Nation under Heaven. For if we ſhould ſtand meerly to that, it hath ever reſolved that the worſhip of God conſiſts in the ſtudy of Wiſdome, Juſtice and all other Vertues. Which as they are moſt eminent in God, ſo he is beſt pleaſed with them in us. And they that addict themſelves to reſemble him in this manner, are the men that ſhall obtain his favour. There are a number of notable ſayings both in Heathen and Chriſtian Writers to this purpoſe. But when all this is ſaid and acknowledged, Men will offend againſt theſe Rules of Vertue: and what ſhall they do then? what will make him ſatisfaction, and procure a reconciliation with him (whom they have reaſon to think their offences

have

have made their enemy) is a thing that can never be certainly reſolved without a Revelation. Without which alſo we can have little ſecurity of the immortality of our Souls, and of the life to come. Which hath inclined all Mankind to liſten after a Revelation, and to catch at any thing which pretends to come from God to them. For as *Plato* acknowledges (when he ordains there ſhould be no alterations made in the ancient Cuſtomes about Sacrifices, becauſe) *it is not poſſible for mortal nature to know any thing of theſe matters*, without it. No, ſays he, (not long after in the ſame Book *) as no body ſhall ever perſwade me that there is any greater Piety, than true Vertue, and as there is nothing more excellent can be taught, than how thoſe that honour Vertue ſhould rightly worſhip God with Sacrifices and other rites of purifying: So *none can teach this*, εἰ μὴ θεὸς ὑφηγοῖτο, unleſs *God ſhow him the way, and be his Guide and Leader* in ſo excellent a work. But if we ſearch into all the records that are in the World, what is there that can ſtand in competition with the Chriſtian way of worſhipping God, or pretend to come with ſuch authority from him? I have examined thoſe that have moſt to ſay for themſelves; and they can produce

* *In Epinom.*

produce no ſuch *WITNESSES* as Chriſtianity doth: No, not that ancient Revelation made by God to *Moſes*. As for the old Pagan ways, which were very various, I am aſhamed to mention them. It is manifeſt they ſuffered themſelves to be cheated by impure Spirits, and took the anſwers of Dæmons for the Oracles of God. But *ask now of the days that are paſt, which were before us, ſince the day that God created Man upon the Earth, and ask from the one ſide of Heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any ſuch thing as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it,* that God indeed appeared among Men, and was *manifeſt in the fleſh*: as is evident by all the ſigns and wonders and mighty deeds, by voices from Heaven, by his Reſurrection from the dead, and all the other Witneſſes which have teſtified this truth to the world. Ask again, hath God ever aſſured Men of any thing, by ſo many and ſuch evident teſtimonies, as thoſe which I have produced. *Unto us it was ſhown, that we might know,* that Jeſus is the Lord, and *beſide him there is no other* (if I may again allude to the words of *Moſes*, iv. Deut. 34, 35.) *out of Heaven* he hath made us hear his voice that he might inſtruct us; and *upon Earth* he hath ſhown us his great

wonders,

wonders, *that every tongue might confeſs Jeſus is the Lord, to the Glory of God the Father.*

III.

That now is the next thing I am to preſs, as a neceſſary conſequence of what hath been ſaid in the foregoing Treatiſe. Though there were ſuch ſlender proofs, in compariſon with ours, that God ſpake to *Moſes*, and though others, as I ſaid, were drawn away by the ſubtilties of evil Angels, yet they all believed and gave great reverence to that which was delivered to them. Every Nation gladly received and held faſt, that which did but pretend to come from Heaven. Which muſt needs extremely reproach us and put us to eternal ſhame, if we having better evidences, ſhould not only be Believers, but have a ſtronger faith in Jeſus. That which *Plato* thought was to be wiſht for, is now come to paſs: *God is come to be our Guide and Director.* The very wiſdome of the Father hath appeared to teach us. He that made all the World, is come down hither to reform us. The WORD IS MADE FLESH, that as he had *Principalum in cælis* (to uſe the words of *Irenæus**) the Lordſhip in Heaven, ſo he might

* L. 4. cap. 37.

might have *Principatum in terra*, the ſame Soveraignty upon Earth. He hath appeared alſo in wonderful and aſtoniſht brightneſs; to convince us of his authority, and to make us know aſſuredly that he is *God bleſſed for ever.* Shall we not then hear his words? ſhall we not deliver up our ſelves to receive his Heavenly inſtruction, which came with ſuch powerful demonſtration? God forbid that any of us ſhould be ſo perverſe, as hearing ſuch *WITNESSES* ſpeak unto us for the Lord Jeſus, we ſhould give no credit to them.

*L. de vera Relig. cap. 3.

I cannot but believe, as S. *Auſtin* * excellently diſcourſes, "that if *Plato* now lived, "and would vouchſafe to anſwer my Que- "ſtions; or rather if any Scholar of his, "being perſwaded that *truth is not to be "ſeen with corporeal eyes, but by a pure "mind; and that nothing hinders the ſight "more than a life addicted to luſt, and falſe "Images of ſenſible things, which, impreſſed "on us, beget various errors, and that there- "fore the mind is to be purified, that it may "behold that unchangeable beauty, which is "always the ſame, and always like it ſelf;* "If, I ſay, a Scholar of his thus taught by "him, ſhould ask him, whether in caſe "there ſhould be a Man, Great and Divine,

"that

"that ſhould perſwade the People at leaſt
"to believe ſuch things, though they could
"not perceive them (or if they did per-
"ceive them, were ſo ingaged in vulgar
"errors that they durſt not or could not
"oppoſe them) He would not judge him
"worthy of Divine honour: I believe he
"would Anſwer, that this could not be
"done by Man; unleſs perhaps the *very*
"*power and wiſdome of God* ſhould honour
"ſome perſon (who was not taught of men,
"but from the Cradle illuminated by the
"moſt intimate knowledge of things) with
"ſo great a grace, and ſtrengthen him with
"ſuch reſolution, and bear him up with
"ſuch a majeſty, that contemning all things
"that evil Men deſire, and induring all
"things that they dread, and doing all
"things that they admire, he ſhould con-
"vert Mankind, with equal kindneſs and
"authority, to ſo wholeſome a Faith. And
"he would add, that it was to no purpoſe
"to ask him what the Honours are which
"ought to be given to ſuch a perſon, when
"it is eaſie to be diſcerned, what honour is
"due to the wiſdome of God: by the gui-
"dance and governance of which, he
"would ſingularly deſerve of Mankind,
"and do ſome thing for their Salvation,
"proper only to himſelf, and which was

" above Men to do. Now if theſe things,
" which I have ſuppoſed, be really done, if
" there be good records of them, if from
" a Country, in which alone One God was
" worſhipped, and where ſuch a perſon was
" to be born, there came choſen men, who
" by their Vertues and their Sermons have
" kindled in Mens breaſts the flame of the
" Divine love, and have left the inlight-
" ned Earth under a moſt wholeſome Diſ-
" cipline, if every where it is preached,
" that *in the beginning was the Word, and*
" *the Word was with God, and the Word*
" *was God*, if to the perceiving and em-
" bracing this, (that the Soul may be cu-
" red, and recover ſtrength to entertain
" ſo great a light) the covetous hear ſuch
" words as theſe, *Lay not up your treaſures*
" *upon Earth*, and the luxurious are told,
" that *he who ſoweth to the fleſh, ſhall of*
" *the fleſh reap corruption*, and the proud
" are told, that *he who exalteth himſelf ſhall*
" *be abaſed*, the angry are exhorted *when*
" *one cheek is ſmitten to turn the other*, they
" that live in diſcord are taught, *to love*
" *their enemies*, the ſuperſtitious are in-
" ſtructed, that *the Kingdom of God is with-*
" *in us*, to the curious it is ſaid continually,
" *look not at the things that are ſeen, but to*
" *thoſe which are not ſeen*, and laſtly it is

ſaid

"ſaid to all, *Love not the world, nor the*
"*things that are in the world*; if theſe
"things are read throughout the world,
"if they be chearfully heard with great
"veneration, if after ſo much bloud, ſuch
"fires, ſo many crucifixions of Martyrs,
"the Church is grown more fertile, and
"hath propagated it ſelf to the moſt bar-
"barous Nations, (and to omit the reſt)
"if men are every where ſo converted to
"God, that every day all mankind an-
"ſwers almoſt with one voice, LIFT UP
"YOUR HEARTS UNTO THE
"LORD; why ſhould we drowſily ſtill
"continue in a ſottiſh unbelief?

There is nothing can be ſaid in the excuſe of ſuch Souls, as having received notice of ſuch a marvellous Love of God to mankind, and ſuch evident proofs that it is no fancy; will not be perſwaded to entertain the belief of it. But when light is come into the world, chuſe to remain in darkneſs; and will be guided merely by themſelves, when there is a revelation come from God. Which ought to be entertained with the greateſt joy, as the thing which the world wanted and wiſht for: and without which they could meet with no reſolution of their doubts, nor

certain directions how to pleaſe God, whom they had ſo highly offended. In this the Chriſtian Religion gives us full ſatisfaction, and propounds nothing to our practice, but what the wiſeſt men ever ſaid was beſt to be done, and took for the moſt excellent piety. As for that which it propounds to our belief, it is all made credible by this one great Truth, which is proved by a number of Witneſſes, that *Jeſus is the Son of God.* We ought to receive that which ſuch a perſon taught, either with his own mouth, or by thoſe whom he inſpired, and ſent in the ſame manner, as the Father ſent him. For if it be ſo reaſonable, as I have demonſtrated, to be a Believer, then it is as unreaſonable to be an Unbeliever: and no man will be able to open his mouth to juſtifie ſuch a ſin, againſt ſo many Witneſſes as will appear to teſtifie, that they called him to the faith by the cleareſt and the moſt powerful evidences that ever were. For if the *Jews* were bound to believe in *Moſes*, having no more teſtimony from God than you have heard; we are much more bound to believe in *Jeſus*, who hath more and greater Witneſſes that he not only came from God, but is gone to God, and hath all things given into his hands, whether

ther in Heaven or in Earth. As it was ſaid of them therefore (xiv. *Exod. ult.*) that *they believed the Lord and his ſervant Moſes*, ſo let it be ſaid of every one now, that *we believe the Lord and his Son Jeſus.* For this very end were theſe words written by S. *John*, that *we may believe on his Name, ver.* 13. And this is the ſumm of what God would have us to do, the Commandment he hath given us; *That we ſhould believe on the Name of his Son Jeſus Chriſt, and love one another*, iii. 23. If we do the former, we ſhall ſee an evident conſequence of the latter. For when we are perſwaded that He is the Son of God, we cannot but ſee that we ought to receive every word that he ſays, with affectionate reverence, and to let every thing that is ſaid concerning him into our very hearts; ſo that we fear him, and love him, and become obedient to him, and depend upon his word, and, as he himſelf hath taught us, honour him as we do the Father Almighty.

For we are aſſured by thoſe who heard him, and were with him from the beginning, and were witneſſes of his Reſurrection, and received the Holy Ghoſt from him, that He was the WORD MADE

FLESH; and that the *Word was God*, and *all things were made by him*, and is the *Son of God* not by office only, but in his nature and eſſence, and having aſſumed our Fleſh, therein reigns *Lord of all* for ever. For what reaſon ſhould we refuſe to receive that, which is ſo credibly witneſſed to be the very Truth of God? They that report theſe things were ſo pious, as I have proved, that they cannot be ſuſpected to have invented them; nay, the very end for which they publiſhed them, quits them from all ſuſpicion of fraud and forgery. For they aimed at nothing, but by making man ſenſible of his great Dignity, and the high honour God hath put upon him; to poſſeſs his heart with an ardent love to God and to his Neighbour, and to make him perfectly ſubject unto his will. And is there not great reaſon, if we believe what theſe Witneſſes ſay, that we ſhould apply our beſt endeavours to pleaſe him; by living ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly, and by abſtaining from the leaſt appearance of evil? Think what *Jeſus* was, and then reſolve with your ſelves what regard is due to his Word. Will not the wicked man tremble, when he hears him ſay, that none ſhall go to Heaven but they that do the will of his Father which is in Heaven?

ven? Then he does not believe that theſe are the words of the Son of God, or does not mind what he reads. Who can with any face call him Lord, Lord, and not acknowledge that he ought to do the things that he ſays? And to acknowledge this, and not do thoſe things, what a madneſs is that; if we believe our Lord is able to call us to a ſevere account for our neglect of his will? What is there that can recommend chaſtity and purity of heart to our affection, together with mercifulneſs, meekneſs, peaceableneſs, poverty or contentedneſs of ſpirit, the humility of little children, faith in God's providence, and ſuch like vertues, if this will not; that the Son of God hath preacht them to the world as the moſt amiable qualities in the eyes of God, without which we ſhall never ſee him, nor inherit his Heavenly Kingdom? Are not theſe his words? Do not his Sermons teach us theſe Leſſons? And if we do theſe things, does he not ſay we ſhall *have everlaſting life*, and *enter into his joy*, and *ſee the glory which God hath given him?* For what cauſe do we queſtion whether this be the way to happineſs? Do not the ſame *Witneſſes* which tell us that he is the *Son of God*, teſtifie withall that he came to teach us

Gods will, and that this is his will, which by the Goſpel is declared unto us? Why do we not ſeriouſly believe it then, let me ask again? Are not the Witneſſes good, who affirm that Jeſus is the Son of God? Have we not examined them, and find no cauſe why we ſhould reject them? Or will you receive nothing upon the credit of a Witneſs? That's a very ſtrange obſtinacy; which rejects ſo certain a way of knowing many things, that cannot be otherways known.

For the notices of things do not come to us all one way, but by divers means, either by our *Senſes*, or by our *Reaſon* and Diſcourſe, or by *Report*. By all theſe ways the knowledge of things is conveyed to our Mind: And if we refuſe to be informed by any of them, there are a great number of things, certainly true and of great conſequence to us, of which we muſt remain ignorant. That there are other Countries far diſtant from this where we live, and that ſuch and ſuch things are there to be had, and have been there done, moſt Men can know by no means but only by report; for there are but few that can go and ſee. And he that will not receive the teſtimony of another in this caſe, deprives

prives himſelf of a conſiderable piece of knowledge, whereof others partake; and which might be as uſeful to him as it proves to them. But if for this wilful loſs he ſhall pretend to aſſign a juſt cauſe; ſaying, that he cannot believe any thing unleſs it be demonſtrated to him by clear and evident conſequences from Principles of known reaſon, he will become ridiculous. For it is abſurd to expect the knowledge of any thing in any other way, but that which is proper for its conveyance to us. To demand a proof of a matter of reaſon, from our ſenſes; or for what we diſcern by our ſenſes, from our reaſon; is equally ridiculous: and ſo it is to demand an evidence for things of Faith (which we know by report only) either from our Senſes or our Reaſon. That there are ſome things come to our notice only by Faith, is plain from what paſſes every day. And it is as plain, that they muſt be proved to be true in their proper way; that is, by the ſoundneſs of the Teſtimony upon which we receive them: As no man requires a reaſon for what he ſees and feels, nor asks that he may ſee with his eyes that of which he reaſons and diſcourſes: ſo he ought not to ſeek for a teſtimony of ſenſe or reaſon, for that which he can know by no way but by report.

port. As for example; no Man demands a reaſon to prove that the Sun ſhines; In this his ſenſe gives him ſatisfaction; and if he were born blind, no reaſon could prove to him that it was not Night. Nor does any man, that is in his wits, require that he may behold God with his eyes, whom he knows by diſcourſe and the reaſon of his mind; and knows him alſo by that to be inviſible. In like manner it is altogether prepoſterous, when a man comes and reports that ſuch a perſon dyed on ſuch a day; to ask for a reaſon to prove it, or to demand that he may ſee it; for it is impoſſible to ſee him dye again upon that day. That is not a thing to be known either of thoſe ways, by ſenſe or reaſon, but only by the teſtimony of others who were preſent at that time, and are, we think, worthy of belief. Why do we ask then for any other proof, that Jeſus was born of a Virgin at ſuch a time, did ſuch wonderful works, preached ſuch an holy Doctrine, was crucified, dead and buried, roſe again from the dead, aſcended to Heaven, and ſent from thence the Holy Ghoſt? Theſe are not things now to be ſeen or felt, nor can we gather them from the meer diſcourſe of our own reaſon, which tells us nothing of them: But we have them by report from

a great many *Witneſſes*, who ſay they ſaw and heard and felt all that which they would have us believe. There is no other uſe of reaſon in this caſe, but only to examine and judge whether this report be credible, and founded in the teſtimony of God. Now that is evident to any impartial enquirer, from what hath been ſaid concerning theſe *Witneſſes*, whoſe report there is no reaſon to ſuſpect, as it is certain it can never be diſproved. Why ſhould we then be ſo much our own enemies, as to deprive our ſelves of this ſaving knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt? That is, why do we not give credit to the report of theſe Witneſſes concerning Jeſus; ſince, by the only proper means, whereby ſuch things can be proved, I have made it good that the Father declared him to be his Son; and He appeared in Glory to teſtify to himſelf; and the Holy Ghoſt demonſtrated he could be no leſs; and his Life, Death, Reſurrection, and all the reſt (of which there were ſo many upright Witneſſes) aſſure us that it is a certain truth. Would we be ſo difficult to be perſwaded to go to a Man or a Place, where ſeveral honeſt neighbours informed us, upon their word, nay upon their life, we ſhould be promoted to great honor, or be poſſeſſed of a fair eſtate? Do we not

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believe one another in our daily traffick? and drive conſiderable bargains, merely upon the credit we give to ſome perſons, who inform us of the advantage we may make by them? Do not men undertake long journeys, and more dangerous voyages, merely becauſe they are told that ſuch an one is dead to whom they are heir, or that ſuch rich commodities are to be had in exchange for meaner goods? Who is there that does not deſire his Witneſſes may be accepted and their teſtimony taken for good proof, either to clear his innocence, or to ſettle his eſtate? Now, ſays the Apoſtle (immediately after the alledging of all theſe Witneſſes in Heaven and in Earth, to prove the truth of Chriſtianity) *If we receive the Witneſs of men, the Witneſs of God is greater: for this is the Witneſs of God, which he hath teſtified of his Son.*

The meaning of which is this; If men whoſe honeſty you cannot impeach, give their teſtimony in a Court of Judicature, it is never diſallowed, nor can you be permitted to ſet it by, and make nothing of it; but it is neceſſarily admitted, for an end of ſtrife. The weightieſt cauſes are decided, all matters depending are determined

mined and judged, according to the evidence that is given by witneſſes of unblemiſhed faith. *In the mouth of two or three witneſſes* (as the known ſaying was) *every word* (or rather, matter) *is eſtabliſhed.* That is, brought to an iſſue and concluded, if any controverſie have aroſe to unſettle it. Nay, the teſtimony of one man, if we have no reaſon to ſuſpect his credit, is in our own private thoughts, though not in Law, ſatisfaction great enough to aſſure us of the truth of what he ſays: And we think it ſuch a reproach to give him the lye, that we cannot but believe him; finding a deſire in the ſame caſe to be believed our ſelves. Now if things ſtand thus between us and our neighbours, will we not allow God (ſays the Apoſtle) as much as we yield to them? Shall not his word determine and conclude us? When he gives evidence of a thing, ſhall we ſtill diſpute it with him? That, beſides the undutifulneſs of it, is too great a ſtubborneſs. We may rather be taught how to behave our ſelves towards him, by the meaſure men expect from us, and we from them: Yea, God does more deſerve credit than any man; for, as he adds, *the witneſs of God is* GREATER, *i. e.* is of far more validity and certainty;

it may more ſecurely be relied on, than the witneſs of any men whatſoever. God is not only greater than men, but his *Witneſs* alſo or Teſtimony is greater (which muſt be carefully noted) it is of more force and ſtrength to ſupport any concluſion ; we may more undoubtedly found our faith upon it ; becauſe it is not liable to any of thoſe exceptions which may prejudice the beſt teſtimony of men. *Two* things there are that leſſen the teſtimony of men, if we compare it with God's, and make it to be of a nature more weak and infirm. The *one* is, that though a man be reputed honeſt, and therefore we cannot legally except againſt his Teſtimony, yet it is poſſible he may be a deceiver, and we cannot look into his heart to know whether he be or no. We may not be able to prove the leaſt deceit by him, in what he ſays or ever has ſaid or done ; and it is poſſible he never delivered any thing contrary to truth, or did any thing contrary to juſtice: but yet we can never free our mind from this thought, ſince we know not his inward man, that there is a poſſibility alſo, it may be otherwiſe with him. But then *ſecondly*, ſuppoſe him perfectly honeſt, and that it is impoſſible he ſhould put a cheat upon us ; yet it will be always poſſible that he may

may be cheated himſelf, becauſe all men are fallible and may be miſtaken. The greateſt integrity in the world cannot ſecure a man, but the weakneſs of his underſtanding, and the ſubtilty of others may ſometimes impoſe upon him: ſo that though he thinks what he ſays to be true, it may be otherwiſe in it ſelf than it is in his thoughts. Herein therefore the Teſtimony of God is GREATER than the teſtimony of men, that it is not liable to either of theſe ſuſpicions; it being utterly impoſſible that he ſhould either be deceived himſelf, or that he ſhould deceive us. He can neither lead us into an error (which we all acknowledge to be contrary to his Goodneſs and Truth) nor fall into one himſelf, which is as contrary to the perfection of his underſtanding, and his Omnipreſent being. The teſtimony of God then being ſo indubitable, that it is above the teſtimony of any men, it ought with all reverence to be received when he declares that *Jeſus is his Son*: for if it were but equal to humane teſtimony, it ought not to be refuſed. Now *this is the WITNESS OF GOD*, ſays the Apoſtle, *which he hath teſtified of his Son*. That is, It being granted to be moſt rational that we ſhould receive the teſtimony of God, nay, give it greater

greater reſpect than we bear to that of men; I aſſure you that the evidence which we give you concerning *Jeſus* is the very teſtimony of God; and therefore do not ſlight it. It is not we that bear witneſs to him, ſo much as God. We do not deſire you to hear merely what we ſay, but what God himſelf hath ſaid, who hath given many aſſurances of this truth. If there were but *two* of them, they might, by your own rules, very well expect to find entertainment; but there are no leſs than *ſix* witneſſes, every one of them Divine, they all ſpeak from God, and therefore you cannot deny your aſſent to what they prove. For the *firſt* witneſs, is *God the Father himſelf*, who called *Jeſus* his well-beloved Son. And the *ſecond*, is the *Word of God*, upon which account, whatſoever he ſays, is God's teſtimony alſo. The Holy Ghoſt, which is the *third*, that *proceeds from the Father*, and came on purpoſe to bear witneſs to his Son. As for the *fourth* (Water) *the Doctrine was of GOD*, his life was the *life of GOD*; *John*'s Baptiſm *was from Heaven*, and he is called (i. *John* 6.) *a man ſent from GOD*. Then, for the *Bloud* which is the *fifth* witneſs, it is called *GOD's own Bloud*, xx. *Acts* 28. And it appeared to be his, by his gathering

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it up again after it was ſhed, and taking it into the Heavens, where he appears with it in the preſence of God for us. And the laſt of theſe witneſſes is expreſly called the *Spirit of GOD*, xii. *Matth.* 28. So that it is *GOD*, you ſee, who ſo many ways bears witneſs of his Son; there is ſomething Divine in every one of theſe *Witneſſes*, in thoſe *on Earth* as well as in thoſe *in Heaven*; and therefore we cannot without an affront to GOD reject their teſtimony. For then He would have worſe meaſure from us than men have, and we ſhould give leſs reſpect to ſix Witneſſes of his, than to two or three of our neighbours. If *Jeſus* came not with clear demonſtrations, with fulneſs of proof, then deny him any admittance; but if God hath ſo many ways juſtified him to be his Son, if his Life was ſo excellent, his Bloud ſo holy, his Spirit ſo Divine, then we ſhall never be able to juſtifie it before any knowing man, much leſs before God, if we do not believe him: and that heartily and fully, in every thing; no more doubting of the truth of what he ſays, than we do of thoſe things which our eyes and our ears report to us, or of thoſe, which are delivered unto us, upon the faith of the whole world.

For which end it ſhould be our endeavour, that our Faith may reſt upon a ſure and ſtrong foundation; and be laid on ſuch grounds, that it may ſtand the faſter, in a time of temptation. The ignorant man's Faith indeed may be as ſtrong, as his that knows moſt, and what he hath learnt by Education, may be ſo confirmed by Cuſtom, that he will never ſtir from it: but is only the effect of Nature, which produces the ſame reſolutions in thoſe who are of other Religions. The Chriſtian way of obtaining a ſtrong Faith, is firſt to *ſee the Son*, and then *to believe on him to everlaſting life*, as our Saviour himſelf teaches us, vi. *John* 40. To *ſee him* is to perceive and diſcern by evident tokens that he is the Son of God, the true way to life: upon which ſight and plain demonſtrations we ought to *believe in him*, and ſubmit unto him, as our Lord. That's the true *Chriſtian Faith*, which flows from knowledge, and is founded upon the underſtanding of what ſuch Witneſſes as theſe ſay concerning *Jeſus*. It relies upon the teſtimony of the *Father*, of the *Word*, and of the *Holy Ghoſt*, is wrought by the *Spirit*, and confirmed by *Water* and *Bloud*. And therefore we ought to ſtudy this place

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of holy Scripture, and have it much in our thoughts, that ſo our *Faith may ſtand in the Power of God.* For otherwiſe, how ſhall we be able to follow the Apoſtolical Precept, which would have us, when we are queſtioned, *to render a reaſon of the hope that is in us,* 1 *Pet.* iii. 15. We may be able to ſtand our ground though we be ignorant of the true cauſes of belief; but the enemies of it will look upon it as a fooliſh obſtinacy, if we have not ſo much underſtanding as to give ſome other account of *our* Faith, than they give for *theirs.* Suppoſe they ſhould ſay, Why are you a Chriſtian? whence is it that you look for a Reſurrection, a Glorious body, and Eternal life in another world? Would they not think us very ſtupid, if we could ſay nothing to them but that ſo we have been always taught, and are reſolved to believe? Would not this be as good a reaſon for them as it is for us; and make us unworthy of the name of Chriſtians, who know our Books no better, which bid us give, and furniſh us with, a reaſonable account? Conſider therefore what Anſwer you would ſhape to them, that ſhould make ſuch a demand. The Apoſtle ſays it is fit they ſhould have a reaſon, what is the beſt that you can offer for their ſatis-

faction? ſhall I tell you? The plain Anſwer is this, That *Jeſus*, whoſe Religion we follow, was the Son of God; and therefore we believe theſe things becauſe the Son of God taught us ſo, who cannot deceive us; and we will not exchange this for any other perſwaſion though we ſhould die for it. It is certain enough that every body who hears this, will preſently conſent to us, that he is a fool who doth not ſtoop to him and comply with us, if it be certain that *Jeſus* is the Son of God. But how do you prove that, will be the next queſtion. Here is the labour, this is our work; and whence will you fetch convincing Arguments, to make them yield to you this weighty point? There is no ſuch Compendious Abridgment of them any where, that I know of, as in this place of S. *John*, which furniſhes us with reaſons both many and mighty to perſwade us and others that *Jeſus* is the Son of God. You may tell them that the *Father Almighty* ſaid ſo, by voices from Heaven, in the audience of credible perſons; and that the *Word* ſaid ſo, as they may be informed of S. *Paul*, who had no reaſon greater than this to force him to leave all, and with the daily hazard of his life to follow *Jeſus*. You may alledge the teſtimo-

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ny of the *Holy Ghoſt*, both at his Baptiſm and afterward; the marvellous ſanctity of his Doctrine and Life; the Confeſſion he made at his bloudy Death; the Glory of his Miraculous works; his Reſurrection from the Dead; the Power of the ſame Spirit in his Apoſtles, after he was gone to Heaven; all the Miracles which were wrought long after their times, in the places where the holy Martyrs of Jeſus ſuffered; together with the wonderful ſucceſs of theſe Witneſſes, who perſwaded innumerable People in all Countries, to become the ſubjects of this crucified King, Chriſt Jeſus.

Study this place therefore, I ſay again, very well, that you may be able to oppreſs any gain-ſayer, with the great weight of thoſe reaſons, which you render of your faith. And ſtudy it likewiſe, till you feel the faith of Jeſus doing ſomething in your hearts; till that faith which hath ſo good a cauſe, have ſutable effects: that is, till it change you, as it is ever apt to do, into the nature of that cauſe from whence it flows. It comes from God; ſee that it carry you to him, and change you into his likeneſs. It relies on his Teſtimony, be ſure that it make you perfectly of his mind. It comes with the authority from the Word

of God it ſelf, and from the Holy Ghoſt, let it mightily inſpire you with devotion to him, and ſet your affections on things above, where Chriſt is now at God's right hand. It relies upon the Purity of his holy Doctrine and Life; and therefore ought to purifie our hearts, that we may behave our ſelves in all holy converſation and godlineſs. It is founded on his Bloud, on which we can never look, but it will deaden our affections to this World, and make us crucifie the fleſh, with its paſſions and luſts. It ſtands upon the power of God, and ſhould therefore make us ſtrong in the Lord and in the power of his might. It grows, as you ſee, upon ſundry roots, and flows from ſeveral heads; and therefore ſhould diſpoſe thoſe in whoſe hearts it is planted, to be abundant in the work of the Lord, and to bring forth much fruit: that we may be known to be indeed the Diſciples of Jeſus, whoſe faith is ſupported by ſuch numerous Witneſſes. And this now will lead me to the next thing, which S. *John* here makes to be the neceſſary conſequent of this faith; and therefore ought not to be omitted.

IV.

If there be ſuch great, ſuch abundant reaſon to believe that Jeſus is the Son of God, then there is as great a neceſſity lying upon us to be obedient unto him, and punctually to obſerve all his commands. This Faith both requires our ſubmiſſion and obedience to him, and alſo gives us power and ability to perform it. It is a meer trick of the Devil, another piece of his Sophiſtry, when He cannot dig up the foundation of Chriſtianity (which I told you was his firſt indeavour) to hinder all ſuperſtructure upon it: by perſwading Chriſtian People, that Faith and Obedience are no neceſſary Companions; but that they may be good believers, and yet not keep Chriſt's Precepts. Some think they need not; and others, which is the ſame cheat in another ſhape, think they cannot. But I appeal to every Man's conſcience if he be a believer, whether he do not perceive his heart overawed, and his will inclined to reverence and ſubjection, and all his powers mightily moved to tender their ſervice; when he ſeriouſly thinks that Jeſus is the Lord, to whom God the Father hath committed all Judgment, and will render to every Man

according to his works? Do you not feel this faith carrying a great authority with it? Nay, is there not an irreſiſtable energy and vertue in it, while you attend to it, preſſing you to conformity with his holy will? Who can gain-ſay this? And who can ſay then, that his Faith does not both engage and inable him to be obedient to his Saviour, if he do but mind what he believes? He never thinks of that, but it powerfully urges and conſtrains him, to yield himſelf to be a faithful Servant of Jeſus; in every thing that he declares to be the mind and will of God. Theſe uncontrollable inclinations declare to us ſo plainly the tendency and natural diſpoſition of Chriſtian Faith, that we cannot but ſee, it is ſo far from being ſeparable from obedience; that this is eſſentially included in it, and freely flows from it, if it may be but ſuffered to have its courſe, and not be croſſed in its clear intention and deſign. If you be not convinced of this by what you feel, you may learn it of S. *John*, who tells you here what the natural iſſue of our faith is, and what duty it exacts: for it is the ſcope of theſe words which I have expounded, to lay ſuch a foundation of belief, as may unavoidably inforce obedience, unleſs we forget what our belief is. He begins

gins you know this *Fifth* Chapter of his Epiſtle with this Principle, that *every one who believes Jeſus to be the Chriſt, is born of God*: and from thence infers (in that and in the ſecond Verſe) that ſuch a perſon cannot but *love God and all his Brethren*: which Love cannot be diſcerned by any thing, but *by keeping his Commandments. FOR THIS IS THE LOVE OF GOD* (ver. 3.) *THAT WE KEEP HIS COMMANDEMENTS.* Here is the natural fruit of Faith; This is its Progreſs, if you do not ſtop its motions. It begets in our heart a great Love; and Love, is to be Obedient; and that to all God's Commandments, which reſpect either our duty to him, or to our Neighbour. It is in vain to ſay we believe in Jeſus, if we do not heartily love God who ſent him to us. And it is in vain to pretend love to God, if we keep not his Commandments. And it is as vain to ſay we have a dutiful reſpect to his Commandments, if our neighbour have any cauſe to complain of us. *For he that loveth not his Brother whom he hath ſeen, how can he love God whom he hath not ſeen? And this Commandment we have from him, that he who loveth God, love his Brother alſo.* iv. 20, 21.

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Here now, they who have leſs underſtanding of the grounds of Faith, may make up what is wanting in their knowledge, by the heartineſs of their Devotion to God, and the unfeignedneſs of their love to all their Brethren. If they be mightily affected with what they believe, and out of an honeſt love in their hearts to his holy Precepts, be very diligent in their obedience; it will ſupply the defect that is in their underſtanding of the Reaſons why they believe in Jeſus. For if a ſmall argument in a weak and dull underſtanding, does the ſame work with a ſtrong argument in a quick and piercing, where lies the difference; but only that the One can ſerve Religion more with his mind and diſcourſe, the other meerly with his good will and his pious life? But will any man preſume to be ſo impious, as to imploy his will to find out ways to excuſe his Obedience to him, whom he acknowledges for his Lord? He ſhould rather conſider ſeriouſly how reaſonable and how neceſſary it is, that he who knows ſo well what Jeſus is, and how *he came*, ſhould above all other Men do him the moſt faithful and zealous ſervice. For if we do but obſerve how many arguments here are to perſwade

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us to this Faith in Jeſus, with what Authority he was ſent, and with what power he came to us; we ſhall think it was for ſome very great work: and feel it impoſſible, while we are ſenſible of this, not to do what he requires, though now perhaps it ſeem impoſſible to be done. He is not come of himſelf; but hath the mark and ſtamp of the Supreme Lord upon him. He evidently ſhows that he hath a Commiſſion from God; and brings (as I may ſay) the Broad-ſeal of Heaven with him, to warrant what he demands, though it be never ſo great a tribute of Obedience. Here are *Witneſſes* to him above all exception; and they all bid us behave our ſelves ſubmiſſively towards him, and not deny to do any thing that he would have us. *Him hath God the Father ſealed*, as he tells us, vi. Joh. 27. and by his Voice from Heaven commands us to *HEAR HIM*. Which was as if he had ſaid, If you will believe him that cannot lye, then Jeſus is the TRUTH: to every word of whoſe mouth we ought to hearken; that is, faithfully obey and obſerve. For as God is ſaid to hear us, when he grants our deſires; ſo we hear him or his Son, when we fulfill his pleaſure. The WORD likewiſe (2.) when he appeared to S. *Paul*, made him

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an Apoſtle, *for obedience to the faith among all Nations*, i. Rom. 5. And told him expreſly that he appeared to him for this end, that he might ſend him to the Gentiles, *to turn them from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.* xxvi. Act. 16, 18. The HOLY GHOST likewiſe (3.) is a Witneſs of this, which was *given to thoſe that obeyed him.* v. Act. 32. But lookt upon all wickedneſs as an high affront to it; at which it was *grieved*, and by which it was *quenched*; nay, forced to *depart*, as not induring to dwell in the ſame Houſe with filthineſs and impurity. Unto which the *Water* (4.) or the Holy life and purity of our Saviour in all his actions as well as his Doctrine, was directly oppoſite. And tells us that we muſt be obedient, if there were no other reaſon for it but this alone, that the Son of God himſelf was ſo in every thing. Did God exact obedience of him, that he might demand none of us? Will he ſet us free from that duty and ſervice, to which his dearly beloved Son was ſtrictly tyed? He fulfilled all righteouſneſs, and obſerved even that Law of Ceremonies, to which we have no obligation: And do we think to be hereby excuſed from paying all thoſe reſpects which are naturally due from Creatures

tures to the author of their being, and which we cannot but owe to thoſe who are of the ſame kind with us? What is it that hath ſo perverted the underſtanding of Chriſtian People, as to poſſeſs them with apprehenſions quite contrary to common reaſon? What ailes us that we cannot ſee the end of Chriſt's coming, nay, that we overlook the plain words of his holy Scriptures, which tell us, that he *left us an example*, and expects that we ſhould *follow* it, and be *made conformable* to him, and be *renewed after his image*, in righteouſneſs and true holineſs; *without which no man ſhall ſee the Lord?* This the Bloud (5.) ſpeaks ſtill more effectually. For he would dye rather than diſobey God. *He became obedient to death, even the death of the Croſs*, ii. Philip. 8. which was the reaſon why God ſo highly exalted him, and gave him that Name which he hath above every Name. There was no other way whereby he could aſcend up into Glory: And therefore it is madneſs for us to think to leap up thither, and skip over the holy life of Jeſus. Eſpecially ſince he declares, that his Bloud was ſhed (to which perhaps we truſt for redemption, though we remain in our impurities) *that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie to himſelf*

ſelf a peculiar people, zealous of good works. ii. Tit. 14. To the doing of which (6.) he hath given us the *Spirit* for our helper. Every Miracle that it wrought (to ſay nothing but what is within the verge of theſe words) bids us conſider what a Potent Lord we ſerve: for whom nothing is too hard. By a Thouſand Wonders, by more miraculous works than we could have had time to read, ſhould they have been all written, did he awake the ſleepy World: commanding them to ariſe, and go about his work; and he would be with them, his Power, which nothing can withſtand, ſhould aid and ſuccour them. The obedience, me thinks, which the Winds and the Sea, and the Fiſhes, and the Graves, and the Devils themſelves paid him, call upon us and tell us both what we ought to do, and what aſſiſtance we may expect from the power of his might to make us obedient to his Faith. Who can reſiſt the joynt importunity of ſo many Witneſſes? who can hear all theſe tell us, that *the Son of God is come*, by whom we muſt be governed, and yet be ſo ſenſeleſly obſtinate, as to ſay, *We will not have this man to rule over us?* O deaf ears! O hearts harder than the nether Milſtone! which will not let ſuch loud voices ſink into them; ſuch mighty argu-

arguments penetrate and mollifie them, into compliance with him! What can reduce ſuch Souls and bring them under any government, who will not be reclaimed by the authority of the Son of God? I may *call Heaven and Earth to Witneſs*, againſt ſuch obdurate hearts. The Father, Word and Holy Ghoſt, theſe are Witneſſes in Heaven, that teſtifie it is our duty and intereſt too to ſubmit our ſelves unto him. The Water, Bloud, and the Spirit, they are Witneſſes on Earth, which agree together to perſwade us to take his eaſie Yoke upon us. Can neither Heaven nor Earth prevail with us? Is not *God the Father* Almighty great enough to lay his commands upon us? Is the *WORD* of God of leſs credit, than the common vogue and opinion of the World, with us? Cannot the *Holy Ghoſt* be believed concerning the place from whence it comes, when it ſays that no unclean thing ſhall enter in thither? Do we think his *holy life* to be a troubleſome folly? and deſpiſe his *bloud?* and reſiſt his *ſpirit?* and receive all the grace of God in vain? *Hear, O Heavens, and give ear, O Earth*; after God had ſent many of his Servants who were diſregarded, He laſt of all ſent his Son into the World, ſaying, ſurely *they will reverence my Son*; but they have rebelled againſt him.

I might call for Hell it ſelf to witneſs againſt ſuch perverſe and diſloyal Creatures. The Devils will not fail to accuſe ſuch men hereafter: for *they believe and tremble*; they acknowledge this great Truth, that *Jeſus is the Holy one of God* (iv. *Luke* 34.) which is the very ſame that *Jeſus* himſelf ſaid, when he tells us *the Father hath ſanctified him* (*i. e.* made him his holy One) *and ſent him into the world*, x. *John* 36. And that is more, I doubt, than a great many irreligious ſpirits will confeſs; in their works, I am ſure, the moſt of the Chriſtian world utterly deny it. Do you think the Devils who made that confeſſion would have diſobeyed him, if they might have taken our place, and had his Salvation offered to them? Would they not have ſhaken off their chains, and taken upon them his yoke, had they received ſuch gracious invitations as he hath made to us? Let us not be worſe than they, I beſeech you, by caſting away that hope, which was never given them; and ſlighting ſuch tenders of mercy which are peculiarly directed to the children of men. But let us rather admire, adore and magnifie this amazing love of God, who ſent his Son ſo kindly to

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ſpeak to ſuch wretches as we are. And let us ſhow that we are ſenſible of his love, by hearkening to his voice, and readily ſubmitting our ſelves with all dutiful, nay joyful affection to his commands. *See*, I beſeech you again, *that you refuſe not him that ſpeaketh: for if they eſcaped not who refuſed him that ſpake on Earth, much more ſhall not we eſcape, if we turn away from him that ſpeaketh from Heaven.* Let all his Laws be held moſt ſacred, and be devoutly reverenced and obſerved. Know that this is *your wiſdom and underſtanding*; nay, remember that it is *your life. And therefore keep your Souls diligently, leſt you forget thoſe things which you have heard, and leſt they depart from your hearts all the days of your life.* Chuſe death rather than the life of the *unrighteous, fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, and extortioners, who*, he hath pronounced, *ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* Do you not remember how obſervant the children of *Jonadab* the ſon of *Rechab* were of their Fathers Commandment; and how they could not be tempted, no not by a Prophet, to contradict it? xxxv. *Jer.* 6. What Arguments I pray you had they (ſo reaſonable and moving as thoſe which urge us) for this in-

junction? Might they not have ſlipt many ways, with better colour than we can do, from this obligation? Did there want plauſible pretences to plead their excuſe, if they had abſolved themſelves and not obſerved it? Might they not have ſaid that every Creature of God was good, and none to be refuſed? That their ſtomachs ſometimes required a little Wine, and that it was reaſonable to give them ſatisfaction? That their Father had gone beyond his Authority, and taken away the juſt liberty which God had left them? That they were reſtrained enough by the Divine Laws, and that there needed no more of his making? O the inſenſibleneſs and ingratitude of Chriſtian people, that can think of theſe mens reverence to ſo ſevere and hard a command of their Father, and be leſs obedient to their moſt gracious Lord! What a forehead hath that man who dares venture to break any of his Precepts, when he hath ſo many Reaſons to believe that he hath laid none upon us, but thoſe which are the very mind and will of God; and are ſuch a neceſſary indiſpenſable burden, that unleſs we carry them we cannot be ſaved? There is nothing that can be pretended, why we ſhould not ſtrictly tye our ſelves to his will.

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Not only the love, which engaged the *Rechabites*, enforces our obedience, but infinitely more reaſon than there was in their Fathers will and pleaſure; for we are aſſured that *Jeſus* is the Son of God. He could not but have a perfect underſtanding of what was fit and convenient for us. If there had been any other way more eaſie to Heaven, than this he hath ſet before us, we cannot but think He would have revealed it unto us. If there were any licenſe that could be granted us, to diſpenſe with our obedience, He was not ſo unkind as to conceal it: much leſs would he have taken it upon his death, that none will be allowed. For he declared openly in his Sermons, that he will not only take no knowledge of thoſe who work iniquity, but bid them depart from him, whatſoever relation they pretend to him. And by his Bloud he aſſures us that he preached nothing but the undoubted Truth of God. What is it then, that makes men ſtill continue, either to ſlight all that he ſays, or to give him the lye? It is no better, if we preſume to believe that we ſhall ſhift well enough in another world, though we do what we liſt while we are here. It is to contradict the voice of the Father, of the Word, and of the Holy Ghoſt. It is to

oppoſe the Doctrine, the Life, the Sufferings, the Power and Spirit of the Lord *Jeſus*, who all tell us that we muſt be holy and unblameable before him in love, if we hope to be accepted with him. They that live wickedly and yet hope well, do in effect ſay that He is a Lyar, and that there is no ſuch neceſſity of holineſs, without which, he ſays, no man ſhall ſee the Lord. Or elſe they deſpiſe that bleſſed ſight, which is as bad, and neither dread his diſpleaſure, nor deſire his favour. If they be believers, then they reproach him by their wicked lives, as if he were ſtill dead, and could do no more to make his diſciples better, or to reward and puniſh their good or bad behaviour, than *Mahomet* can, or any other impoſtor. All the Oaths, curſes and blaſphemies which we hear out of Chriſtian mouths, are as ſo many ſpears to pierce our Saviour again, becauſe they ſorely wound his Religion, and tend to the deſtruction of his Kingdom and Government. All the laſciviouſneſs, wantonneſs, and filthy debaucheries that are among us, are a kind of crucifying *Jeſus* afreſh; they are a ſcoff and mock at his Croſs, as a ridiculous piece of folly. They reproach him as if he were an ideot, that did not underſtand pleaſure,

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but would put himſelf to unneceſſary pain and trouble. Nor can we put a much better interpretation upon mens eager purſuit of riches and honours, in unjuſt, uncharitable and irreligious ways, which charges him with great ignorance, to ſay no worſe, who took the quite contrary courſe to happineſs. As for all thoſe who gibe at his Religion, and make themſelves ſport with the Hiſtory of his Birth and of his Sufferings, they come under another rank, being open and profeſſed Enemies to his Majeſty. They do as much as in them lies to hang him upon the Gibbet again, and expoſe him to the ſcorn of the world. They juſtifie the *Jews* in their calumnies and blaſphemies, and take part with *Judas*, or rather are worſe than He, who was tempted only by his covetouſneſs to betray him. And better it had been for theſe men, if they never had been born. It were better for them that a milſtone were hang'd about their neck, and they were caſt into the Sea, or that they had been hang'd themſelves on a Gallows as high as that of *Haman*, than that they ſhould live thus to expoſe the Saviour of the world to ſhame. For though he will not die and riſe again to convince them, yet he will come and appear again to condemn them. *He*

will be revealed from Heaven in flaming fire, taking vengeance of all them that know not God, and that obey not the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus *Chriſt: who ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power,* 2 *Theſſ.* i. 8, 9. Let us therefore take good heed to our ſelves, that we be neither faithleſs, nor unfaithful to our belief. But let us ſettle ſuch an unmoveable faith in our Souls, upon theſe ſtrong foundations which God hath laid for it, and let us ſo ſtir it up by new reflections every day on what we believe, that we may have our portion among thoſe who are ſpoken of in the next words, *ver.* 10. *When he ſhall come to be glorified in his Saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.*

But ſome perhaps will pretend, that there are ſo many things to hinder every man from doing his duty, that though he believe never ſo well, and think obedience never ſo neceſſary, yet he ſhall never be able to comply with the commands of the Lord *Jeſus*, but muſt be forced to break them, even after he hath reſolved the contrary. To this S. *John* hath here alſo taken care to give us an anſwer, when he tells us that ſuch is the power of Chriſtian

ſtian Faith, that by it we OVERCOME THE WORLD, *ver.* 4, 5. *For whatſoever is born of God, OVERCOMETH THE WORLD: and this is the victory that OVERCOMETH THE WORLD, even our faith. Who is he that OVERCOMETH THE WORLD, but he that believeth that* Jeſus *is the Son of God.*

V.

That is the next thing therefore which I am to give a brief account of, that our Lord expects (which he would not do, if he did not endue us with ſufficient ſtrength) that in the vertue of this Belief, we ſhould get the better of all temptations which ſtand in the way of our duty, and would hinder us from the performance of it. By the WORLD, with which we are to conflict till we overcome, is partly underſtood *wicked men*, xv. *John* 18. partly the *tribulations* and miſeries we may here endure by their and other means, xvi. *Joh.* 33. and partly the *allurements* and enticing enjoyments, wherewith all our ſenſes are entertained, 1 *John* ii. 15, 16. All theſe oppoſe us, and ſet themſelves againſt us, either by diſcouraging or elſe flattering us from our known duty. It is hard to be the

object of hatred, contempt or ſcorn; harder to endure alſo poverty, hunger, reſtraint, and ſuch torments as the Apoſtles and other bleſſed Martyrs ſuffered; and perhaps hardeſt of all to reſiſt the perſwaſions of pleaſure, which proſperity and wordly Glory bring along with them. What muſt a Believer do, when he is thus beſet? Muſt he be content to yield himſelf too weak to deal with theſe enemies? Muſt he let the WORLD have the day, and declare that it was impoſſible to ſtand againſt its mighty forces? Or will it be ſufficient to enter into a conflict with them, if it be but to ſay that he was not falſe or cowardly, though he ſuffer himſelf to be over-powred by them? No, the Faith of *Jeſus* is ſtronger than ſo, if it be deeply rooted in our hearts: and will enable us to maſter all theſe, which ſeem to be no equal match for us. Their ſtrength lies only in the weakneſs of our Faith. If we *ſtand faſt*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *in the faith grounded and ſetled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Goſpel*, they will loſe their force and flee before us, and leave us victorious. Theſe ſix *Witneſſes* are ſuch Champions, if I may ſo call them, that the Faith which is led by them, and firmly relies upon them, cannot come off baſely, but muſt needs be triumphant.

1. As for the hatred of men and their deſpiſal, alas! what a contemptible thing does it ſeem? how does it ſneak into nothing, when we look up unto *Jeſus*, and remember that He was the Son of God, and yet endured it (as he tells his Apoſtles, xv. *John* 18.) and thought himſelf never the leſs glorious? It cannot be help'd but we muſt be ſcorned ſometime or other, if we will follow him; unleſs we could perſwade all men to bear us company. But this is our comfort and encouragement, that this is the way to glory, and that now we are conformed to our Saviour, who by the ſhame of the Croſs, hath got himſelf immortal honour; and that the *Father* at preſent approves us, the *Word* delights in us, the *Spirit* of God and of Glory reſts upon us; all theſe Heavenly Witneſſes eſteem and love us, and are pleaſed to ſee us behave our ſelves worthily as *Jeſus* did.

2. And if from hence we paſs through many tribulations, and encounter ſuch troubles and hardſhips as we are all deſirous to avoid, they will not be able to affright or daunt him who hath this faith thus planted in his heart; *For greater is*

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He that is in us, than he that is in the WORLD. Did not the ancient Worthies and great Warriers againſt the WORLD, wade through very great difficulties in the ſtrength of a Faith which was much weaker than this of ours? How did all thoſe brave men whom you read of, *Hebr.* xi. *obtain a good report*, but *through faith*, when it had not received this promiſe? *ver.* 39. Surely, we that underſtand more than they did, we who *know the Son of God is come*, not only by *WATER*, but by *BLOUD*; and who know that Eternal life is in him, and have received the Holy Ghoſt, and are made partakers of ſuch glorious Revelations in the Goſpel of his grace, and who know the certainty of thoſe things wherein we are inſtructed; we, I ſay, cannot but take the courage in the power of ſuch a Faith to behave our ſelves valiantly, and with Chriſtian reſolution, in ſuch like ſtraits and dangers as made their fidelity ſo remarkable. Read what S. *Peter* ſays to encourage us, 1 iii. 14, 15. *But if you ſuffer for righteouſneſs ſake, happy are ye; and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled. But ſanctifie the Lord God in your hearts; and be ready always to give an anſwer to every man that asketh you a reaſon of the hope that is in you.*

you. As if he ſhould have ſaid, It may ſeem a ſtrange folly to ſuffer ſo much as you do, and you may begin to be ſtartled at the troubles which befall you; but bear a reverend regard towards God who hath called you to this ſtate of Chriſtianity, do but ſtand in awe of his Authority who hath bid you hear, that is obey, Jeſus whatſoever it coſt you; and do but tell every Man what reaſon you have for what you do and ſuffer, and what hope you have in him upon this account: And then they will either ceaſe to trouble you, or you will ceaſe to be troubled for what they make you ſuffer. Now what are the reaſons of our Chriſtian hope and patience, but theſe which we are here treating of? If we alledge theſe to our ſelves or to others, it will ſoon appear that we are no fools in expoſing our ſelves to any dangers for righteouſneſs ſake. The *Father* hath bidden us be true to it, ſo hath the *Word* and ſo hath the *Holy Ghoſt*: every one of the other three alſo call upon us to be couragious; for it is a worthy cauſe wherein we are ingaged, and we ſhall not loſe our reward. Here are reaſons enough; and they are ſtronger than all their adverſaries. The World hath nothing to oppoſe ſo weighty as theſe Witneſſes; every one of which I might

might ſhow you (if it would not prove too tedious) lay an obligation on us not to be moved from our ſtedfaſtneſs, but to take up our Croſs and to follow Jeſus. And I the rather paſs by theſe, becauſe I think they are generally of leſs force than the other part of the *WORLD*, which uſes to aſſault Mankind more dangerouſly.

3. I mean the alluring and inticing enjoyments here below, which we are too prone to comply withall. They are of an inveigling and inſinuating nature, and may get admittance by their ſoft violence; when the other cannot prevail by more rough oppoſition. We are apt to fortifie our ſelves againſt evil things, and are many times angry they ſhould attempt to overmaſter us; but to the good things of the *WORLD* we lye naked and open, and there is a treacherous party within that is willing they ſhould enter, nay, ready to open the doors to them. And they are of three ſorts, as the forenamed place in this Epiſtle tells us, *the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eyes, and the pride of life*, ii. 16. All that the *WORLD* contains in it, for the captivating of an earthly Mans affections, and ſatisfying his deſires is comprehended under one of theſe three Names. For the underſtand-

derſtanding of which you muſt know, that the *Hebrews* have a manner of ſpeech which expreſſes the *Object* by the *Act*: and the cleareſt interpretation of theſe words is grounded on that uſe of theirs. So that by *LUST* we are to underſtand all thoſe things that gratifie ſome appetite of pleaſure, wealth, or greatneſs; and by *FLESH* (which is not here, as it is ſometimes a general word) it is moſt agreeable to underſtand the lower and duller ſenſes which lye moſt in the fleſh, and are affected with things that have ſome groſneſs in them. And then the whole phraſe, *LUST OF THE FLESH*, that ſort of things which give content to the touch, the taſte and ſmell; ſuch as are meat, and drink and perfumes, and other voluptuous enjoyments, which, I need not name but, are ſometimes particularly called *FLESH*. And then by the *LUST OF THE EYES*, we are to underſtand ſuch things, as belong to the higher and more refined ſenſe of ſeeing, *viz.* Gold and Silver, precious Stones and Jewels, Lordſhips and large poſſeſſions, noble Houſes and rich Furniture, beautiful Pictures and fair Gardens, fine clothes and coſtly attire; all that is comprehended under the name of *Riches*, which as *Solomon* obſerves, yields only this

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ſatisfaction to the owner, that *he beholdeth them with his eye.* There is little in theſe things but what is all lodged in this ſenſe; and therefore they are called the *luſt of the eye,* becauſe it loves to look upon them, and when that is done, they can do more for him. Only they may prefer a man to that which he calls the *PRIDE OF LIFE;* which ſignifies all thoſe things that flatter and pleaſe the inward ſenſe, our fancy or imagination. Such as are great offices and places of Dignity, noble Titles, all the Honour and Glory of the World, together with the eſteem, at leaſt the applauſe and commendation of men, which is wont to follow them.

One or more of theſe *three* ſorts of things every man naturally hunts after, and his deſires prick him forward in its purſuit. For theſe are mens ſtudy and labour; with theſe the Devil baits his hooks, to catch Souls, and they who do not bite at one will be nibling at another. They that are not tempted by the firſt to gluttony and drunkenneſs, fornication and ſuch like filthineſs, feel the ſecond perhaps incline them to covetouſneſs and the ſordid love of Money, with a thirſt and greedineſs of another kind. Or if they can eſcape and deſpiſe

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theſe, they may notwithſtanding be in danger to be carried away with the humor of prodigality, and affectation of vain-glory, or ambition of Dignities; which is attended with emulation, envy and other dangerous Vices. As the *African* Beaſt which ſome write of, is caught with Muſick, and ſuffers its feet to be fettered while it liſtens to the Leſſons that are play'd to it: So do the generality of Mankind let their Souls be inſnared and led into a miſerable captivity, by the inchanting voice of pleaſure, riches, or glory. Whilſt they hearken to the bewitching melody which ſome of theſe court them withall, they are taken in the mighty Hunter's net, and become a prey to him that lurks for Souls, and ſeek whom he may devour. And it has not been in the power of the wiſeſt Charmers that ever were in the World, to open the eares of the moſt of men, and to convey the ſenſe of better things into them. All the Philoſophy and Learning that was ſo famous in former Ages, could never obtain ſuch numerous chearful and obedient Auditors, as the Syren Songs, which theſe three ſing in Mens eares, have always found. When the World therefore by that wiſdome knew not God, *it pleaſed God*, ſays S. *Paul* (1 Cor. i. 21.)

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by the fooliſhneſs of preaching to ſave them that believe. The faith of Chriſt directs and diſpoſes us to avoid all thoſe dangerous rocks on which they ſplit themſelves who liſten to thoſe deceitful Songs. Now that the Son of God is come, He pulls our feet out of the net; and by his far more powerful charms ſo ſtops our ears to thoſe inchantments, that there is no entrance for them any more. It ſeemed a fooliſh thing indeed to the World, to believe that the crucified Jeſus was the Son of God; but where this ſimple faith prevailed it did more, than all the wiſdome of the World was able to effect before. For it gave them a new underſtanding and ſaved them from periſhing; by making them account it the greateſt pleaſure and glory and treaſures to follow Jeſus, and do the will of God, as he did. *The World*, they ſaw, *paſſeth away and the luſt thereof* (if they do not leave us, we muſt at laſt leave them) *but he that doth the will of God abideth for ever.* So thoſe *three* Heavenly witneſſes, the *Father*, the *Word*, and the *Holy Ghoſt*, aſſure us: whoſe voice as it is moſt ſweet and melodious, ſo it is moſt powerful to diſinchant us, and to preſerve thoſe who receive their teſtimony, from all the bewitching temptations of thoſe other *three*, the *luſt of the*

fleſh,

fleſh, the *luſt of the eye* and *the pride of life*. Nay, here are two *Threes* of infinitely greater vertue and efficacy to prevail with us, than all that the *WORLD'S Trinity* can offer to us, if we will but open our ears, and diligently liſten to their voice.

And how can we chooſe but liſten when the *Father* of Heaven calls to us ſo graciouſly, when the *Word* opens his ſecrets to us, and the *Holy-Ghoſt* proclaims ſuch an abundant love of God towards us: The *Water*, the *Bloud*, the *Spirit*, they alſo with one conſent conſpire with thoſe, and all together ſing this *New Song*, *THE SON OF GOD IS COME*, *the Son of God is come*. This one note of theirs more raviſhes, than all the pleaſures and ſatisfactions which the *WORLD* infatuates its followers withall. Heaven and Earth cannot ſpeak any thing more moving in our ears than this, which again and again ſalutes them with new joy. For what would you have them ſay? would it pleaſe you to hear that Infinite Goodneſs loves us, that the Heavens ſtand open to us, and ſhow us their glory, that God is willing to receive us up thither, that he will make us Heirs of a Kingdom, equal with the Angels, to hear their Songs, and joyn with that Celeſtial Quire? Be-

hold! they are all included in this one ſentence, THE SON OF GOD IS COME. GOD HATH GIVEN US HIS SON. This is the ſweeteſt Aire that can touch our eares: this we can never be weary to hear: this ſtrikes our ſouls, if we underſtand it, ſo gratefully, that we cannot but ſay, let us hear that again. And therefore after the Father, the Word, and the Holy-Ghoſt have bleſt our ears with this *joyful ſound*; here are *three* more that take it up, and repeat it to us with the ſtrongeſt aſſurances, that we hear the Voice of God himſelf. And the oftner we liſten to them and lend them our attention (the more frequently, I mean, we think upon the reaſons we have to believe in Jeſus) the more deaf ſhall we grow to all the ſinful allurements of this World, how inviting ſoever before they have been. For my part, I think there is more real ſatisfaction in the very underſtanding of this one place of Holy Scripture, than in all the delights of worldly men. What is there, I beſeech you conſider, in all their ſenſualities comparable to the rational guſt of what is contained in that one voice of the Father, THIS IS MY WELL BELOVED SON, IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED? What Riches are there to be equalled with

this

this treaſure of Divine knowledge, that God hath beſtowed his own Son upon us? What honour like to this, to be preferred to be the Friends, yea the Sons of God? Can you hear any thing ſo delicious as that voice of the WORD, *To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the tree of life, in the midſt of the Paradiſe of God?* ii. Rev. 7. Were there ever any Jewels ſo precious, as the ineſtimable gifts, wherewithall the *Holy Ghoſt* hath inriched the Church? what Muſick is there fit to bear a part, with thoſe *Hymns, and Pſalms, and ſpiritual Songs*, that it inſpired the hearts of Chriſtians withall? Doth it not even raviſh the heart of a pious man to think of them, though he do not hear the like in theſe days? What is there in all the broken Ciſterns of this World, that taſtes like the *Rivers of living Water*, that Jeſus hath poured out unto us? What peace does it ſpeak to us, like that which by the *Bloud* of Jeſus is purchaſed for us? Or what power is there in any of this Worlds temptation, that can ſtand before the voice of that SPIRIT which ſays *COME, and whoſoever will, let him take the water of life freely?* xxii. Rev. 17. Certainly, in the ſtrength of ſuch a faith ſo fortified, ſo incouraged by all theſe *Witneſſes*, we may eaſily tread the WORLD

under our feet, and make its moſt mighty temptations crouch to us; whereas now, for want of this ſolid faith we ſhamefully bow down to it and worſhip it. Let but any man remember when he reads theſe words, *LOVE NOT THE WORLD*; *for all that is in the WORLD, the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the World. And the world paſſeth away and the luſt thereof; but he that doth the will of God abideth for ever.* Or when he reads any other leſſon in the holy Books, let him but remember, that thus ſays the *Father* of all, and thus ſays his WORD, and this is the voice of the *Holy Ghoſt*, and of all the reſt of the Witneſſes, who teſtifie that *Jeſus* who teaches theſe things is the *Son of God*; and then he will never be perſwaded to yield to the faireſt thing that ever eye beheld, or the ſweeteſt thing the mouth can taſte, or the greateſt pleaſure any other ſenſe is capable to feel, if it muſt be enjoyed by the breaking of any of theſe commandments. No, he will *yield himſelf unto God*, (vi. *Rom.* 13.) and lay himſelf at the feet of his *WORD*, and ſubmit to the dictates and ſentence of the *Holy Ghoſt*, and follow the example of Chriſt's *purity*, and be made conformable

conformable to his *Death*, and be led by his *Spirit*, and think it an honour to be conquered by ſuch Defendants of the cauſe of *Jeſus*. O how hateful would every ſin be to us, though it dreſs up it ſelf never ſo beautifully, and court us with never ſuch promiſes of pleaſure or greatneſs, did we but at the ſame time reflect upon theſe Witneſſes and remember what they have teſtified to us! How ſhould we deſire it? How paſſionately ſhould we tear all its gaudy dreſſes in pieces? How heartily ſhould we deſpiſe all its temptations, which would have us ſlight all theſe great *Witneſſes*, who tell us the *Son of God is come*, and that he is come for this purpoſe, that he might deſtroy the works of the Devil? 1 *John* iii. 8. Every unlawful enjoyment would look like a manifeſt jeer to all theſe, and as if a man ſhould ſay to them, Why do you trouble your ſelves, this is our Darling, our God, and all your perſwaſions ſhall not prevail with us to let it go. It would appear a contempt of God; a laughing of his WORD to ſcorn, who came upon ſo needleſs, at leaſt fruitleſs an errand; a manifeſt challenge to the *Holy Ghoſt*, who by every ſin is boldly oppoſed. And what heart can endure to think of being guilty of ſuch madneſs?

which throws dirt into this *pure Water*, I mean the life of Chriſt, and treads his *Bloud* under feet, and miſcalls the *Spirit* of grace, as if it were not *the Truth*, but had deceived the world when it told them, that *this is the will of God, even our ſanctification. For God* (ſays S. *Paul*) *hath not called us unto uncleanneſs, but unto holineſs. He therefore that deſpiſeth, deſpiſeth not Man but God, who hath alſo given unto us his holy* SPIRIT, 1 *Theſſ.* iv. 3, 7, 8.

To conclude this, you know what is commonly ſaid, and it is a certain truth, of thoſe who are bit with a kind of Spider in *Italy*, which they call a *Tarantula*, that there is no way to cure them of their pleaſant frenzy, but by ſuch Muſick as is appropriate to the motions which their poiſon makes in the brain of him, into whom it is infuſed. Let this be an Emblem of the truth I have now delivered; that the old Serpent having envenomed mens Souls, poiſoned their principles, perverted their affections, aud depraved their lives; there is nothing of efficacy ſufficient to recover them, but only ſuch charms as theſe, which by this *ſix ſtringed* Inſtrument, as I may call it, God hath provided for our Cure. And this will certainly do

it,

it, by infuſing the Faith of *Jeſus* into us, which is the victory whereby we overcome the WORLD. Do but hearken diligently to theſe Witneſſes, do but mind their ſweet conſent, their harmony and agreement in the teſtimony they give to this great truth, that *Jeſus* our Maſter is the Son of God; and there is no venome ſo deadly which this Faith will not expel, no love to the WORLD ſo ſtrong which it will not vanquiſh and ſubdue. It will recover us to our ſelves, and make nothing ſeem ſo ridiculous as the folly and frantickneſs of worldly men; yet it will advance us to a Divine and Heavenly ſpirit, ſo that we ſhall not be apt to receive ſuch peſtilent infuſions any more, but *keep our ſelves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt unto eternal life.*

VI.

For I muſt add now, in the laſt place, that this Faith is ſo far from being unable to conquer all temptations which would hinder us from obeying our Saviour's commands, that it gives us power and ſtrength to do our duty *with chearfulneſs.* So S. *John* here tells us, when he adds to what he ſays of the keeping of his Com-

mandments, that HIS COMMANDMENTS ARE NOT GRIEVOUS. For (as *Oecumenius* well gloſſes) what load is it for a man to love his Brother? What great burden is it to viſit him if he be in priſon? God doth not command thee to deliver him, but only to viſit him. He doth not bid thee knock off his chains, but ſee how he bears them. Nor doth he bid thee cure a ſick man, but only comfort and relieve him. Nor provide dainties for a poor man, but only feed him; nor give rich apparel to the naked, but only cloath them. And ſo we may conclude of the reſt, that it is rather an eaſe than a burden to be ſober and chaſte in all enjoyments of pleaſure; to be content with a ſmall portion of thoſe things, which others deſire with a greedy and ravenous eye; to bear with that patiently which we cannot remedy; to be careful for nothing, but in every thing to make known our requeſts to God with Prayer and Thankſgiving; to be meek and peaceable amongſt contentious people; to forgive thoſe that injure us; to envy no man's greatneſs; and with an humble modeſty, to ſatisfie our ſelves though we be not equal to them. Theſe and ſuch like qualities wherewith *Jeſus* would inveſt us, are in themſelves moſt

deſirable;

deſirable; and, though richer than cloath of Gold, are like our ordinary garments, which are no load to thoſe that wear them. But they are the leſs grievous to thoſe that believe in *Jeſus*; who are endued with power from above, by receiving the teſtimony of ſo many Divine Witneſſes, who aſſure them they are in the way of God, in the company of his Son, under the conduct of the Holy Ghoſt, in the direct rode to that glorious place where *Jeſus* is; and therefore why ſhould not they rejoyce and be exceeding glad to find themſelves thus happy? That load which to a ſick man ſeems intolerable, if it be laid on the neck of one in health is ſo eaſie, that he can run away with it with pleaſure. And ſo it is in the caſe of keeping God's Commandments, which to a man that has ſpoil'd his Soul by following divers luſts, are ſo far from being eaſie, that he thinks them inſupportable and impoſſible to be complied withall; but when he has recovered himſelf by the faith of Chriſt, and hath received the ſupply of theſe new and Heavenly principles, they become to the very ſame man, not only tolerable, but ſweet and delightful. This faith would not be pleaſed to be excuſed from this burden; it would take it ill not to draw in the ſame

Yoke

Yoke with *Jeſus*; it naturally makes us of his Spirit, who ſaid, *I delight to do thy will, O God.* For what is it that we believe? Is it not that *Jeſus is the Son of God*; his well-beloved Son? And ſhall we complain of that work, which was the buſineſs and the delight of God's beſt beloved, when he was in the world? It would be too grievous an accuſation of God, to think that after he had filled the Earth with joy and gladneſs for the coming of his Son, He ſhould inſtantly quench it all, and turn it into heavineſs, by a number of ſuch ſevere and intolerable Commandments, as no man can look upon and not be melancholy. And what are the grounds of our belief? Are they not all that Heaven and Earth can afford us? Are we not as ſure as God can make us? Phy! for ſhame then, what a reproach is it, that any man ſhould ſigh and groan, look ſour and ſad, as if he had all the burden of Heaven and Earth to carry, when he has rather the aid and aſſiſtance of both to ſupport and ſtrengthen him under an eaſie load?

Certain it is, that according to our knowledge and underſtanding, ſo will be our Faith: and according to our faith, ſo will be our ſtrength. Now how can there be

be greater evidence and ſtrength of Reaſon to induce us to believe than theſe *ſix Witneſſes* have given us? They fully ſatisfie our underſtandings; they make it completely rational to acknowledge *Jeſus* to be the Son of God. And therefore why ſhould not this Faith, thus begot and ſtanding on ſuch ſure foundations, give us a very great ſtrength, courage, chearfulneſs and ſpirit; making difficult things become eaſie, harſh things become ſweet, and the moſt tedious ſtay in this world comfortable, by preſenting us, and that ſo ſtrongly, with the power and glory of the Lord *Jeſus?* This Faith you ſee reſts upon theſe ſix Columns, upon theſe two rows of Pillars (as I may ſo ſpeak) on the one ſide ſtands the teſtimony of the FATHER, the WORD, and the HOLY GHOST; on the other ſide, the teſtimony of the WATER, the BLOUD, and the SPIRIT: and therefore nothing will be too great a burden to lay upon it; it will ſupport any weight, and never let us groan, much leſs break under its load. *All things are EASY* as well as *POSSIBLE to him that believeth.*

It is the obſervation of *Seneca*, I remember, that nothing is ſo hard but the mind of man can maſter it, and make it familiar, by conſtant thoughts and pains about it.

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There are no motions ſo natural, but ſome by labour have reſtrained them, and made the forbearance of them eaſie: and none again ſo unnatural but by the like daily practice and attention they have brought themſelves to the delightful uſe of them. As ſome have kept long and tedious faſts, others perpetual ſilence, and have lived out of the company of all mankind, which are examples of the former kind. And we ſee inſtances of the latter, in thoſe who learn to walk and dance upon ropes, to work with their feet, and to dive into the exceſſive depths of the Sea. And can the mind of man alone, when it buckles it ſelf to the buſineſs, be able to perform ſuch difficult things with eaſe and ſatisfaction; and yet remain utterly unable to take any contentment in obedience to Chriſt's Precepts, though it be exalted by faith, and a faith ſo ſtrong, as theſe ſix Witneſſes, if we attend, will work in us? May things to which nature is not inclined be accompliſhed at laſt, and become habitual, and we think God too ſevere to expect from us thoſe duties which are moſt agreeable to our natures, as all the actions of vertue are? And ſhall a weaker power maſter thoſe hard and unnatural tasks, and a power ſtronger than all others ſink under the

burden

burden of the moſt reaſonable, and, in themſelves, moſt natural Commandments? It cannot but put a conſidering perſon into a little indignation, to hear men complain of the uneaſineſs of Chriſt's yoke, when they lay more troubleſome and unmerciful burdens upon themſelves, without any murmuring. How can one ſee men, without ſome impatience, contend with ſwift horſes, and endeavour to out-run them, and yet cry out of the tediouſneſs of the race of God's Commandments? Shall any man perſwade us, that it is not ſo eaſie to learn the way of God's teſtimonies, as it is to work with his feet, or go upon his hands? Shall they make us believe it is ſo hard a buſineſs to bend their wills to God's, when we ſee their bodies made as ſupple as wax, that they may wreath them about at pleaſure? Can it be half ſo troubleſome to lay a bridle on our tongues, as it is never to ſpeak at all? O man! where is thy Reaſon, what is become of thy Soul, that thou groaneſt in the ſervice of God, and canſt make a ſport of far more grievous things? Thy own mind might teach thee better, if thou wouldſt but hearken to its inſtructions; and therefore what may not God expect from the Faith I am ſpeaking of, which

which is a far more powerful Principle, and hath made Men *ſtop the mouths of Lions, quench the violence of Fire, indure torture and not accept deliverance*, when it was much weaker than our faith need now be? I will ingage that if a man do but uſe himſelf frequently to ponder theſe words of S. *John*, and perſwade himſelf fully, upon the teſtimony of theſe Witneſſes that Jeſus is the Son of God, He will account it a ſmall buſineſs to deny his own will as Jeſus did. He will never complain that he muſt refrain from any thing in obedience to him; and whatſoever he requires him to do, he will eſteem it an exceſſive pleaſure. For there can remain no doubt in his mind, that if he be the Son of God, he hath power to help us &that he wil ever be aſſiſtant to us and bleſs us; becauſe by this faith he dwelleth in us and we in him.

I have read of one, of a Noble Family, delicately educated, and of a tender health, who had a great mind to enter upon a Religious courſe of life (as they ſpeak in the *Roman* Church) but was afrighted out of thoſe thoughts by the apparent difficulty of the exerciſes wherein he was to be imployed; for their ill diet, retirement, poverty, watchings and ſuch like hardſhips

he

he imagined could not be endured. Till one day reading thoſe words of the Pſalmiſt, which like a flaſh of lightning ſtruck into his mind (xviii. Pſal. 33. *He maketh my feet like Hindes feet, and ſetteth me upon my high places* (which he expounded to this ſenſe, God will inable me with ſpeed and eaſineſs to run, not only upon the even ground and over the plains, but in craggy and ſteep places; he will lead me not only upon the level, but aſſiſt me to climb Mountains and to overtop the higheſt difficulties that are in my way to Heaven, and) immediately he found all his fears vaniſh, his reſolutions determined, and ſuch a courage put into him, that from this time forward he was immoveably bent to that formerly dreadful kind of life. Would not this word of God then, think you, which I have expounded, inſpire us with as manly a reſolution and greatneſs of mind to obey God's unqueſtionable commands, if we did but ſuffer it to penetrate into our hearts? Did we but conceive that we heard the Father ſay to us perpetually, *This is my Son*, This that came by *Water* and *Bloud*, that climbed even the croſs it ſelf, that ſurmounted the higheſt difficulties, He is my beloved Son; and if we thought we heard the WORD ſay, the *Son of God is come*, *God is*

manifeſted

manifeſted in the fleſh; and felt the *Holy Ghoſt* inſpiring him with the ſame heavenly thoughts; the whole glorious *Trinity* telling us, they will aſſiſt us, and afford us their continual help; it could not but give wings, as I may ſay, to our feet, and make us skip over the moſt mountainous diſcouragements, and run the ways of God's commandments, and not be tired; that we might follow after, and go to the bleſſed Jeſus. For the courſe of life which that Gentleman affected, was that of a Religious Order (as they call it) where they are tied to do more than God commands, to live by a Rule ſtricter than the Goſpel, and under the Will of a Superiour, whom they are bound to obey, as if he were Chriſt himſelf: And it was not the literal ſenſe of the place neither which thus animated him, and put it into his heart to undergo ſuch a ſervitude. And therefore if he did the will of men ſo chearfully, and undertook more than God requires of us, and upon a weaker perſwaſion, by accommodating the ſenſe of an holy word to his own preſent thoughts; there is no doubt but a right faith would indue us with the like power (notwithſtanding the appearance of great labours) in the true ſervice of God, in obedience to his indiſpenſable commands:

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we having this word of God to ſtrengthen our faith, the prime and natural intention of which is to make us confident, that He who leads us in this way, the Captain that conducts us, is Gods Son, his moſt dearly beloved; who cannot but be as faithful as he is powerful to make good all his promiſes to us.

And we ſhould the rather ſtrive to follow after him, and to run with joy the race that is ſet before us, becauſe then we ſhall have the honour ſtill *to teſtify* to him upon Earth; we ſhall be his *WITNESSES* and prove at this day, by his mighty power in our hearts and lives, that he is the Son of God. *Turks* and *Jews* that read not our Books, cannot be convinced by any arguments at preſent, ſo much as by this. They ſee how we live; but we can ſhew them no Miracles to convince them, nor can we make them hear the voice from Heaven for their converſion; till we can recommend our Bible to their ſerious conſideration. And the only way to do that, is for us to live more juſtly, ſoberly, charitably and piouſly than the reſt of the World. By which means they may be brought to have better thoughts of Jeſus, by having good thoughts of us; and be induced to read our Books, by ſeeing ſo much of them in our good works.

And what happy days might we hope to ſee, could we but uſe this argument to prove Jeſus to be the Son of God; that no men are ſo good, ſo holy and pure, ſo peaceable and kind-hearted, ſo free from fraud & all guile, as thoſe who are called by his Name? How glorious then would the name of our Lord be over all the world? *His word would run, and be glorified* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 2 *Theſſ.* iii. 1.) juſt as it did in ancient days; when they could ſay confidently, *Non de noſtro, ſed ex illorum numero*, &c*. "They are "not of our company, but of theirs (that "follow the Heathen ſuperſtition) who rob "and ſteal by Sea and Land, who murder "and kill, who cheat and cozen, who drink "and ſwill, who proſtitute their bodies and "profane themſelves by filthy luſts; the "Whores, the Fornicators, the Cheats, the "Forgers of Wills and Teſtaments, the "Drunkards, the Thieves, the perjured Per-"ſons, and all the reſt of the wicked crew "are of their number: nothing of this can "be objected to our People, *whoſe whole Re-"ligion is to live without wickedneſs, nay with-"out any ſpot or blemiſh.* How would it ſtop the mouth of all the world, nay make them fall down and confeſs that God is certainly among us, could we but ſay thus in our days and make ſuch a challenge to *Turks* and all other

* *Lact. lib. 5. cap. 19.*

other unbelievers? Shall we always let our Saviour want this noble teſtimony? Shall we do nothing but talk of him, and prattle of our Faith, and make our boaſt that we are right Believers, and damn all Infidel People? Alas, alas! theſe big words will do nothing. As long as they ſee us live no better than they, we ſhal not perſwade them that we believe better. And therefore let us have this worthy ambition in our hearts, to become *WITNESSES* our ſelves unto Jeſus. Let us ſtudy how *to ſhow forth his praiſes*, (or rather *Powers**) *who hath called us into this marvellous light.* And ſince we cannot do it by Miracles, let us do it by well doing and patient continuance in it. So ſhall *the Name of our Lord Jeſus be glorified in us, and we in him, according to the grace of our God, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt* (2 Theſſ. i. 12.) who at his appearing will *bear WITNESS* to us (xi. Hebr. 4.) that we were faithful and righteous, by receiving us, as God did *Abel*'s gifts, up unto himſelf.

* ἀρετὰς, 1 Pet. 2. 9.

For hereby alſo we ſhall be inſtruments of conveying this Faith down to Poſterity, with ſome power. Would you not have them believe the ſame that you do? Is it not your deſire that the next Age may confeſs him, as well as this? There is no ſuch effectual means can be thought of to pro-

mote and propagate his Faith, as the fruits of it in an holy life. This will make men afraid now to ſpeak evil of him; and this will teach our Children after us to be zealous profeſſors of Chriſtianity, and not ſuch cold believers or ſuch infidels as we ſee and hear of in the World. Aſſure your ſelves it is Prophaneneſs which hath made ſo many unbelievers in this Age. Increaſe of wickedneſs not only in themſelves but others, hath made ſome ſo impudent as to ſcoff at Religion and blaſpheme Chriſt. While they ſee thoſe who acknowledge him do no better than themſelves, they are inclined to think that their belief makes them no more worth, than thoſe who have none at all. Nay, ſince they concur with them in their wicked practiſes, they imagine that their fear of Hell, and hope of Heaven is no part of their belief, but only of their profeſſion. The hands of Infidels are ſtrengthened in their impieties, by the perfidiouſneſs of ungodly believers. They joyn with them to pull down Chriſtian belief; and make that be thought nothing, which doth nothing above what infidelity doth. And therefore let all thoſe who love the memory of our Saviour, who love their poſterity, and would not have them in danger to be drown'd in a deluge of infidelity, put a ſtop

to

to it; by *holding the myſtery of the faith in a pure conſcience.* 1 Tim. iii. 9. *Let every one that nameth the Name of Chriſt depart from iniquity*, and endeavour all he can to ſupport the honour of his Name and of his Religion, by a ſtrict obſervance of all his holy commands. They who believe not or mind not what they believe, may *think it ſtrange that you run not with them to the ſame exceſs of riot, ſpeaking evil of you* (1 Pet. iv. 4.) *But ye beloved, building up your ſelves on your moſt holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghoſt, keep your ſelves in love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt unto eternal life.* Jude 20. 21.

And that now is the next thing which flows from hence. If we believe the Record or *Witneſs* which God hath given of his Son, it contains in it the greateſt joy in the World. For *this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life: and this life is in his Son.* But I muſt refer that to another Diſcourſe alone by it ſelf.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy-Ghoſt.

GLory *in the higheſt*; Let the Holy and undivided Trinity be for ever glorified by all Mankind; eſpecially by all Chri-

ſtian People: who are made partakers of *the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghoſt. Eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him: But God hath revealed them unto us by his ſpirit. Bleſſed be God.*

I moſt thankfully receive the manifold teſtimony which he hath given of his well beloved Son; and humbly *bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, of whom the whole family of Heaven and Earth is named, that he would grant me according to the riches of his glory, to be ſtrengthned with might by the ſame ſpirit in the inner man, that Chriſt may dwell in my heart by faith; that being rooted and grounded in love, I may be able to comprehend with all Saints, what is the bredth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Chriſt which paſſeth knowledge, that I may be filled with all the fulneſs of God.*

And God forbid that any Soul who hears the voice of theſe Witneſſes of God, ſhould *refuſe and turn away from him that ſpeaketh from Heaven:* and hath declared to us the unſearchable riches of God's grace, and the whole counſel of his will. O that all they, upon whom the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt hath

hath ſhined, may moſt heartily believe in his Name. Let them all be *knit together in love, unto all riches of the full aſſurance of underſtanding, to the acknowledgment of the myſtery of God, and of the Father, and of Chriſt; in whom are hid all the treaſures of wiſdome and knowledge.* And God forbid, that any of them ſhould *hold the truth in unrighteouſneſs. But as they have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo let them walk in him; rooted and built up in him, and eſtabliſhed in the faith, as they have been taught, abounding therein with thankſgiving.*

And quicken that faith, O thou author and finiſher of it, that it may work with great power in all Chriſtian hearts: and mightily bow their wills to forgo any of their own deſires, rather than diſpleaſe thee, and forfeit thy love and favour. Let it inable them to overcome the World; that they may be no longer ſlaves to the luſts of the fleſh, the luſt of the eye and the pride of life; but conquering all theſe, may *yield themſelves unto God to be the ſervants of righteouſneſs, and obey from the heart that form of doctrine which is delivered unto them.* And may the powerful working of faith and love and hope, make all our duty eaſie to us; that we may ever render thee cheerful as well as conſtant ſervice. May thy teſtimo-

ſtimonies be our daily delight, and *the rejoycing of our heart.* May we *love them above gold, yea above fine gold.* May they be *dearer unto us than thouſands of gold and ſilver.* May we daily *renew* our ſtrength; *and run and not be weary, and walk and not faint.* May the holineſs of our lives bear witneſs to the ſincerity of our faith; that others may *glorifie thee our God for our profeſſed ſubjection to the Goſpel of Chriſt.* And we *obtaining a good report by faith,* and carrying this teſtimony out of the world with us, that we have pleaſed thee; thou mayſt receive us to thy ſelf, to be glorified with thee, and to rejoyce in thy love towards us for ever. *Amen.*

THE END.